

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Application due July 16, 2026



Administration for Community Living








Office of Disability Services Innovation

National Paralysis Resource Center

Opportunity number: HHS-2026-ACL-AOD-PRRC-0029



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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 July 16, 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 (ACL)

Office of Disability Services Innovation

Improve the health and quality of life of individuals living with paralysis through a nationally recognized resource center staffed by experts in the field.

Summary

ACL plans to award one cooperative agreement to operate the National Paralysis Resource Center (NPRC). The NPRC will serve as a national source of trusted information and referral, peer support, and community-based resources for people living with paralysis, their families, caregivers, and support networks. It will provide an accessible website, trained information specialists, peer support, and quality-of-life grants to help people build independence, strengthen community participation, and improve quality of life. The NPRC will also conduct outreach, work with partners across the country, and track results to improve services and show impact.

Funding details

Type: Cooperative agreement

Expected total program funding over the performance period: Up to \$30,000,000

Expected total program funding per budget period: Up to \$10,000,000

Total expected awards: One

Funding range per applicant per budget period: Up to \$10,000,000

We plan to fund awards in three 12-month budget periods for a three-year period of performance from September 1, 2026 to August 31, 2029.



Have questions?

See [Contacts and Support](#).

Key facts

Opportunity name:

National Paralysis Resource Center

Opportunity number:

HHS-2026-ACL-AOD-PRRC-0029

Federal assistance listing:

93.325

Cost sharing: None

NOFO version: Original

Key dates

Application

submission deadline:

July 16, 2026

Optional notice of

intent deadline:

Expected award date:

September 1, 2026.

Expected project start

date:

September 1, 2026

See [intergovernmental review](#) for other submission processes that may apply to this NOFO.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants

Only these types of organizations may apply:

- Domestic public or private non-profit entities including state and local governments.
- Indian tribal governments and organizations (American Indian/Alaskan Native/Native American).
- Faith-based organizations.
- Community-based organizations.
- Hospitals.
- Institutions of higher education.

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.
- Does not contain documented commitment to solicit, select, and make subawards totaling at least 35% of the total annual federal award.
- Exceeds the 50-page limit for the project narrative. Any pages that exceed 50 pages will be removed and only the first 50 pages of the Project Narrative will be provided to the merit reviewers for funding consideration. NOTE: The Project Work Plan, Letters of Commitment, Organizational Charts, and Resumes/Vitae of Key Project Personnel are not counted as part of the Project Narrative for purposes of the 50-page limit.
- Your budget must be at least the minimum award amount and no more than the maximum award amount listed in Section II.

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. If you receive an award, we will include your voluntary commitment in the award.

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

This program is authorized under Section 14301 of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (Christopher and Dana Reeve Paralysis Act) and Section 317 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280g-9).

Program description

Purpose

The purpose of the NPRC is to improve the health and quality of life of people living with paralysis.

The NPRC will serve as the nation's go-to source for:

- Trusted information.
- Real-time help.
- Community capacity-building.
- Peer support.
- Community-based resources that promote independence and participation.

The NPRC will advance:

- Independence.
- Informed choice.
- Full participation in community life for people living with paralysis.

The NPRC will reduce environmental, social, and systemic barriers to health and community living.

The program will strengthen community capacity through competitive subawards. It will also track progress through performance measures and a public dashboard.

Background

People living with paralysis often face:

- Disconnected systems of care.
- Inconsistent information.
- Barriers to getting long-term services and supports. These challenges can lead to:
- Inappropriate services.
- Preventable secondary conditions.
- Increased healthcare costs.
- Reduced independence.

The Christopher and Dana Reeve Paralysis Act authorized the Secretary of Health and Human Services to fund projects to improve the quality of life of people living with paralysis. Since its establishment, the National Paralysis Resource Center has helped

people living with paralysis, their families, caregivers, and support networks connect to reliable information, practical tools, peer support, and community-based resources.

Through national information and referral services, accessible educational materials, outreach, and partnerships, the Resource Center has supported informed decision-making, self-advocacy, independence, and participation in community life.

The Resource Center has also strengthened community capacity through quality-of-life grants and partnerships with organizations across the country. These efforts have supported local projects that improve access, reduce barriers, expand opportunities for community participation, and address practical needs related to independent living, transportation, accessibility, employment, peer connection, and family and caregiver support. As more people live longer with paralysis, there is still a strong need for a national resource center that offers reliable information and community supports.

Goals, expectations and outcomes

The **goals** of the NPRC are to improve:

- Health.
- Independence.
- Quality of life for people living with paralysis.

The NPRC will also help people:

- Build self-advocacy skills.
- Make informed choices.
- Participate more fully in community life.

It will work to reduce barriers that affect health and community living.

The NPRC **expectations** include:

- Launching and maintaining a public dashboard by year two that shows at least one key output and one key outcome.
- Using a performance and reporting system that links federal funding to project activities, outputs, and outcomes.
- Conducting both process and outcome evaluations.
- Using feedback from people living with paralysis to improve services and materials.
- Strengthening peer support through mentor recruitment, matching, quality standards, training, and timely access.
- Ensuring subawards strengthen community capacity, reduce barriers, and improve quality of life.
- Using plain language and accessible formats so people can understand and use NPRC information.

Expected outcomes include:

- Increased access to reliable information and support.
- Improved knowledge and self-advocacy.
- Greater independence and community participation.
- Stronger community capacity to support people living with paralysis.
- Fewer barriers to services and community living.
- Broader reach to underserved populations and.
- Stronger performance data to show results and support continuous improvements.

Target population

In this funding opportunity, paralysis refers to a range of disabling conditions due to stroke, spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, or other central nervous system disorders that result in difficulty or inability to move the upper and lower extremities.

The NPRC will serve people living with paralysis of all ages, including people with co-occurring or secondary disabilities. The NPRC will also serve their families and support networks.

Emphasis on reaching people who are unserved, underserved or hard to reach

The NPRC should place special emphasis on reaching people who are unserved, underserved or hard to reach, including:

- Veterans.
- Children and youth.
- Older adults.
- People who are incarcerated or were formerly incarcerated.
- Tribal communities.
- Rural populations.
- People experiencing homelessness.
- People with substance use disorders.
- People who are uninsured or underinsured.
- Survivors of violence.
- Individuals with co-occurring developmental, intellectual, physical, psychiatric, sensory, or emerging disabilities.

Independent Living Philosophy

ACL expects the NPRC to follow the principles of Independent Living (IL). This includes:

- Consumer control.
- Self-determination.
- Peer support.
- Full inclusion of people with disabilities.

Programs and services should reflect these principles by centering on the voice, choice, and independence of the people served.

Required activities

You will address all six required activity areas below.

Activity A: Strengthen nationwide access to reliable information, tools and real-time help

You will operate a national information and referral (I&R) center that provides:

- Accurate, up to date information.
- Easy-to-read resources.
- Real-time help.

You will operate the I&R center using current methods that reflect how people find information and connect today. You will:

- Maintain a comprehensive, accessible, Section 508-compliant national website that makes it easy for people to find reliable information.
- Create navigation tools to access resources when they need them.
- Provide real-time access to trained information specialists and other experts who can respond in multiple languages to a wide range of questions.
 - This includes questions about rehabilitation services, insurance, and adaptive recreation.
- Develop informational products, toolkits, and resource mapping tools based on people's information needs.
- Ensure all informational materials are written in plain language.
- Share materials that turn research into practical information people can understand and use.
- Get feedback from people with lived experience and use that feedback to improve the Center's I&R.

Activity B: Strengthen community capacity through state and local investments that improve quality of life

You will operate a quality-of-life community investment program that helps community-based organizations across the nation improve quality of life for people with paralysis.

- Explain how the program will help reduce barriers to health and community living.
- You will use at least 35% of the annual federal award for a competitive national subaward program.
- You will maintain enough staffing to manage the subawards efficiently, reducing administrative costs over time to direct more funds to the quality-of-life subawards.
- You will provide financial oversight, program support and technical support to subrecipients to make sure funds are used for the approved purpose.

Subawards

You will ensure subawards:

- Promote independence, choice, and community integration.
- Strengthen long-term services and supports.
- Are awarded through an open and competitive process.
- Do not require matching funds.
- Are spent within 12 months after the subaward is made.
- Are focused on priority areas of national need.

Priority areas

You will work with people with paralysis, their families, and their support network to identify priority areas for subawards.

You will use data, input from people living with paralysis and information on past quality-of-life investments to identify priority areas for subawards.

Priority areas may include:

- Employment.
- Improving accessibility.
- Assistive technology.
- Support for families and caregivers.
- Transportation.
- Institutional transitions.
- Preventing institutionalization.
- Rural outreach.

Activity C: Increase individual independence and participation through peer support programs

You will operate a nationwide peer support program for people living with paralysis and their caregivers. The program will provide person-centered support based on each person's needs and preferences. You will:

- Recruit and retain volunteer peer mentors across the nation with a broad range of experiences and backgrounds, so you can match people based on their preferences and needs.
- Maintain a directory of peer support groups and mentors.
- Set quality standards for peer mentors and groups to be included in the directory.
- Ensure timely access to peer support for those who request it.
- Identify gaps in existing peer support and develop ways to address them.
- Provide training, practical tools, resources and technical assistance to peer groups and mentors.

The aim is to strengthen peer support skills that promote independence, self-advocacy skills, and participation in community life.

Activity D: Conduct on-going promotional activities and outreach to increase visibility and number of people using NPRC resources

You will promote the NPRC nationwide as a trusted source of information and support for people living with paralysis, their families, and members of their support network.

- You will use outreach strategies that reflect how people find and use information today.
- You will share information widely so that people across the country, and people who are hard to reach, can connect to NPRC's resources.
- Your outreach efforts will target people living with paralysis, families, professionals, and underserved communities.
- Your strategy will include co-branding with ACL, conference participation, digital outreach, and outreach to people who are not already connected to services.

Activity E: Collaborate and partner with relevant organizations

You will work with key partners to improve outcomes for people of all ages living with paralysis, including those with co-occurring or secondary disabilities, as well as their families and support networks.

Strong partnerships will ensure that:

- Project activities reflect lived experience and professional expertise.
- Respond to the needs of people and their families.
- Improve access, inclusion, independence, and community participation.

Partners should have clear roles for how they:

- Share information.
- Identify barriers.
- Help carry out strategies to address those barriers.

Each key partner will play a role in supporting project goals and required activities and remain active throughout the project period.

Activity F: Measure performance and evaluate outcomes

You will work with a group made up mostly of people who have paralysis to evaluate how well each required activity is carried out and what results it achieves.

- You will work with the group to look at the overall impact of the NPRC and whether project activities are improving the lives of people with paralysis, their families and their support networks.
- You will keep a performance data and reporting system to help ensure that the data you collect is accurate and useful.
- You will use performance findings to:
 - Review the project regularly and support improvement.
 - Report to ACL twice a year.
 - Refine delivery service.
 - Strengthen effective strategies.
 - Improve the program's impact on people and their families.

Performance and evaluation required activities

Measuring how well each required activity is carried out

You will complete two types of evaluations:

- A process evaluation.
- An outcome evaluation.

Process evaluations

First, you will conduct a process evaluation.

- This will show whether activities are carried out on time, and with the intended partners and participants.
- It will help you identify what is working well and what needs to be improved.

You will also assess how efficiently the project is operating.

- This includes reviewing how staff time, funds, and other resources are being used.
- You will examine whether administrative tasks are completed on time and in a cost-effective way.
- You will examine where there are opportunities to streamline procedures, reduce delays, or lower administrative costs.
- You may review workflows, examine spending patterns, and speak with staff and partners to identify where time or resources may be tied up.

The goal is to reduce unnecessary administrative costs so that more funding can support activities that improve the quality of life for people with paralysis, such as the quality-of-life subawards.

- You will share all this information with the group made up mostly of people living with paralysis.
- You will discuss how well the project is working and ask for their feedback on changes that may be needed.
 - This includes ways to improve efficiency and direct any savings to activities that improve the quality of life.

You will document any changes you make to the project and why they were needed.

Outcome evaluations: Measuring the impact of the NPRC

You will also conduct an outcome evaluation.

- This will measure the results of your activities and show whether they are helping to improve the quality of life for people with paralysis.
- The outcome evaluation will compare actual results to the targets you set and help show whether your work is making a meaningful difference.
- Working with a group made up of mostly people living with paralysis, you will use available national data to identify key quality-of-life measures.
 - These measures will include areas such as housing, health, employment, where people live, age, and education.
- Using national estimates of how many people are living with paralysis, you will set clear, measurable targets for the indicators that matter most to people with paralysis.

Annual data collection

Each year, you will collect data from project activities to measure performance against these indicators.

This may include:

- The number and types of services provided.
- The number of participants served.
- Information reported directly by participants about their experiences and outcomes.

You may also use follow-up surveys, interviews, or other tools to understand how participants' quality of life has changed.

- You will compare this information to the national data and to your targets.
- This will help you identify where progress is being made, and where changes may be needed.

Performance data and reporting systems

To carry out the process and outcome evaluations, you will:

- Describe the system to collect, manage, and report performance data for all required activities, including subawards.
- Implement a performance and reporting management system that shows the line from federal funding to grant-supported activities to outcomes for people with paralysis and their families.

The system will track key inputs, outputs, and outcomes across all program areas, including:

- Who uses services.
- Who is reached.
- How subawards are distributed.
- And what results the program achieves.

Public dashboard

To support transparency and accountability, you will launch a public dashboard by the beginning of year two of the grant award.

You will describe:

- What outputs and outcomes will be included when the dashboard launches.
- How often the data will be updated.
- How the dashboard will improve transparency, accountability, and public understanding of project performance.

This dashboard will be easy for the public to access online. When launched it will include up-to-date information on at least one key program's output and one key outcome.

Over time, you will add additional outputs and outcomes. This will allow ACL, project partners, people with paralysis, and the public to see:

- How funds are being used.
- What activities are being supported.
- What results are being achieved.

Supporting the dashboard with data

To support the dashboard, you will collect and organize data on your activities and results throughout the year. This may include:

- The number of people served.

- The types of services provided.
- Participant feedback.
- Progress toward meeting your targets.

You will update the dashboard regularly so that users can clearly see how the project is performing over time.

The goal is to make it easy for anyone to understand what the project is doing, how resources are being used, and whether the work is making a difference.

Cooperative agreement terms

Cooperative agreements require substantial ACL project involvement after an award is made. There are specific roles for both you and ACL.

Your responsibilities

- Fulfill all program requirements described in this NOFO.
- Collaborate with ACL to finalize and refine the work plan within 45 days of award.
- Document outcomes and maintain quality assurance systems.
- Report semi-annually on progress and performance, including findings from the NPRC performance and reporting management system, and beginning in year two, maintain a publicly available dashboard on at least one key program output and outcome.
- Manage and monitor subawards in compliance with federal regulations.
- Collaborate with ACL on branding and public communications.

Our responsibilities

- Provide substantial involvement in program oversight.
- Conduct regular meetings to monitor progress.
- Provide technical assistance.
- Participate in major project activities, as appropriate.

Managing disagreements

Disagreements related to programmatic or administrative matters will first be addressed through informal resolution between the awardee and the ACL project officer. If unresolved, matters may be elevated through established ACL and HHS grant dispute resolution procedures.

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.
- Basic research, such as scientific or medical experiments.
- 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](#).

Program-specific limitations and policies

The recipient must allocate at least 35 percent of total federal funds awarded annually through an open and competitive national subaward process to eligible nonprofit community-based organizations serving individuals living with paralysis in the United States. Subawards must be expended within 12 months, may not require matching funds, and may not be used for medical services or fundraising activities. Federal funds under this program may not be used to provide direct medical care or clinical services. All materials and digital content developed under this award must acknowledge ACL funding, clearly distinguish the NPRC brand from that of the recipient organization, comply with Section 508 accessibility requirements, and use plain language. The recipient must establish written procedures for subrecipient monitoring consistent with 2 CFR 200.332 and collect and report performance data.

Indirect costs

Indirect costs are those shared across multiple projects and not easily separated.

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

Method 1 — Approved rate. If you currently have an indirect cost rate approved by your cognizant federal agency, you may use that rate.

Method 2 — *De minimis* rate. If you do not have a negotiated indirect cost rate, you may elect to charge a *de minimis* rate (see [2 CFR 200.414\(f\)](#)). This rate may be up to 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

In this step

Find the application package [23](#)

Get registered [24](#)

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-AOD-PRRC-0029. 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](#). You can see step-by-step instructions at the Grants.gov [Quick Start Guide for Applicants](#).

Need help? See [Contacts and Support](#).



Step 3:

Build Your Application

In this step

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Application checklist

Make sure that you have everything you need to apply. You will find the forms on Grants.gov.

Narratives

Item	Grants.gov form	Page limit
<input type="checkbox"/> Project narrative	Use the Project Narrative Attachment form.	50 pages
<input type="checkbox"/> Budget narrative	Use the Budget Narrative Attachment form.	None

Attachments

Insert each in a single Other Attachments form.

Item	Page limit
<input type="checkbox"/> Indirect cost agreement	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Commitment letters	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Proof of nonprofit status	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Resumes and job descriptions	None

Other required forms

Use each required form in Grants.gov.

Item	Page limit
<input type="checkbox"/> Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Key Contacts form	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Grants.gov Lobbying form (Certification Regarding Lobbying)	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Project/Performance Site Location form	None

Application contents and format

This section includes guidance on each component found in the application checklist.

Application page limit: 50 pages

Submit your information in English and express whole number budget figures using U.S. dollars.

Required format

Required format for project and budget narratives.

Font: Times New Roman or Arial **Format:** PDF

Size: 11-point font

Footnotes and text in graphics may be 10-point.

Spacing for project narrative main content: Double-spaced

Spacing for budget narrative: As needed

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

Margins: 1-inch

Include page numbers.

Project narrative

Page limit: 50

The project narrative is the most important part of the application. We use it as the primary basis to decide whether your project meets the statutory requirements and to review its merit. The project narrative should give a clear and concise description of your project.

Be sure to cite all your sources. Merit reviewers may lower your score if you do not.

Also study the merit review criteria under each section to make sure you answer all questions and cover all topics reviewers will look at.

Project summary

Provide a brief project summary of no more than 265 words. Write it for the general public. You will need to include:

- **Goals:** Broad overall purpose, like a mission statement that says what you want to do and where you want to be.
- **Objectives:** Narrow, specific, and clear steps toward the goals. These are the “hows” to achieve the goals.
- **Overall approach:** General overview of what you will do.
- **Outcomes:** These are the measurable results of a project. Include expected changes among those served, such as clients, systems, organizations, and communities. These should tie directly to your goals and those of this funding.
- **Products:** The materials and other deliverables you expect to generate through the project.
- **Duration:** The anticipated start and end dates of the period of performance.

Project relevance and current need (15 points)

Problem statement (10 points)

When discussing the need for a national resource center for people with paralysis, include:

- Current information on the needs and challenges faced by people living with paralysis and their families using both numbers and other supporting documents.
- Information about how common paralysis is, its main causes, and it affects people, families, and support networks at different stages of life.
- Information about the barriers people face such as:
 - Disconnected systems of care.
 - Unreliable information.
 - Difficulty navigating services.
 - Gaps in community-based supports.
 - Limited coordination among providers.
- An explanation of how these barriers can lead to inappropriate services, delayed support, preventable secondary conditions, and less independence.
- Information about how secondary conditions and co-occurring disabilities affect health, emotional well-being, and quality of life.
- An explanation of how these can worsen existing barriers and contribute to unequal access and outcomes.

- Information about disparities affecting special and service-limited populations, including:
 - Rural communities.
 - Tribal communities.
 - Veterans.
 - People with co-occurring disabilities.
 - People who are not connected to disability or aging service networks.
- A clear explanation of why a nationally coordinated resource center is needed to address these gaps in information, services, and community supports.
- Clearly define the target population or populations to be served.
 - Explain why a nationally coordinated resource center is needed and how the proposed project will identify needs, respond to those needs and align with the six required activity areas in this funding opportunity.

Table: Scoring criteria

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly documents the current status of the field and key challenges faced by people living with paralysis and their families. (2 points) • Identifies specific needs using current information and supporting documents. (2 points) • Clearly defines the target population(s), including underserved and service-limited populations. (2 points) • Demonstrates why a nationally coordinated resource center & outreach is necessary to address documented gaps. (2 points) • Explains how the proposed project aligns with and supports all six required activity areas. (2 points) 	10 points

Goals and objectives (5 points)

The goals of the NPRC are to improve health, independence and quality of life for people living with paralysis.

- State at least one overall project goal.
 - List specific, measurable objectives that support it.
 - Your objectives will address all six required activity areas and support the purpose of the NPRC.
- You will describe how the NPRC will achieve the following results:
 - Increase access to reliable information and support.
 - Improve knowledge and self-advocacy.

- Improve independence and community participation.
- Strengthen community capacity to support people living with paralysis.
- Reduce barriers to services and community living.
- Expand reach to underserved populations.
- Provide data that shows whether these outcomes were achieved.
- You will want your objectives to be specific, time-bound, and measurable over the three-year project period.
- Describe how your goals and objectives support ACL priorities of promoting independence and improving access to services.

Table: Scoring criteria

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly states one overarching project goal aligned with the purpose of the NPRC. (2 points) • Identifies specific, measurable, and time-bound objectives. (2 points) • Demonstrates alignment of objectives with all six required activity areas. (1 point) 	5 points

Approach (35 points)

In this section, you will address:

- Proposed special target populations and organizations.
- Information and referrals.
- Subaward strategies.
- Peer support.
- Promotional activities and outreach.
- Collaboration and partnerships.

Special target populations and organizations (3 points)

- You will identify underserved, unserved, hard-to-reach and service-limited populations the project will serve. These may include:
 - Rural communities.
 - Veterans.
 - Children and youth.
 - Older adults.
 - Tribal communities.
 - People with limited English proficiency.

- People with co-occurring disabilities.
 - Others not currently connected to disability or aging service networks.
- You will describe the specific strategies you will use to reach and engage these populations.
- Explain how your project design and implementation will respond to community cultural and language needs.
- In this section, focus on outreach strategies for these priority populations.

The broader national visibility and outreach strategies will be addressed in the promotional activities and outreach section.

Table: Scoring criteria

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly identifies underserved, hard-to-reach and service-limited populations. (1 point) • Describes specific strategies to reach and engage those populations. (1 point) • Shows how the project will respond to community, cultural and language needs in its design and implementation. (1 point) 	(3 points)

Strengthen nationwide access to reliable information, tools, and real-time help (8 points)

You will operate the NPRC as a national information and referral center that provides timely, accurate, and accessible information for people living with paralysis, their families, caregivers, and other members of their support networks.

- Explain how you will provide information in multiple formats and languages and how you will ensure that materials are easy to understand and responsive to user needs.

In your response, address all of the following:

- Information and referral center operations.
 - You will operate a national information and referral center that provides timely access to reliable information, tools, and support.
 - Explain what communication channels you will use, such as website, phone, email, chat, or other methods.
 - Explain how you will ensure accessibility, timeliness, and national reach.
- Information specialist model.
 - Describe your staffing model for trained information specialists and other experts.

- Include staff qualifications, training, supervision, and language capacity.
- Describe how you will provide real-time support.
- Explain how you will ensure staff can respond effectively to a wide range of questions, including questions about:
 - Community living.
 - Services and supports.
 - Benefits.
 - Rehabilitation.
- Related resources.
 - Informational products and research-to-practice materials.
 - Describe how you will develop, update, and share informational products, resource guides, navigation tools, and research-to-practice materials.
 - Explain how you will:
 - Identify user needs.
 - Turn complex information into practical content people can understand and use.
 - Gather feedback from people with lived experience to improve these materials over time.
 - Website, accessibility, partnerships, and branding:
 - Describe how you will maintain a Section 508-compliant national website that is easy to use.
 - Explain how the Independent Living philosophy will guide website content and broader project activities.
 - Describe how you will work with partner organizations to strengthen content and reach.
 - Explain how the NPRC brand and website will remain clearly distinct from the applicant organization while appropriately acknowledging ACL support.

Table: Scoring criteria

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear approach to operating a national information and referral center that provides timely, accessible information in multiple formats and languages. (2 points) • A clear information specialist model, including staffing, qualifications, training, and real-time service delivery. (2 points) • Describes how it will develop and share informational products, navigation tools and research-to-practice materials that people can understand and use. (2 points) • A plan to maintain a section 508-compliant national website that reflects the independent living philosophy, works with partner organizations, clearly distinguishes the NPRC brand from the applicant organization and appropriately acknowledges ACL support. (2 points) 	8 points

Strengthening community capacity through state and local investments that improve quality of life (8 points)

You will use at least 35% of the total annual federal funds award for an open and competitive national quality-of-life subaward program.

- Explain how you will structure, manage and oversee this program.
- Explain how the program will:
 - Strengthen community capacity.
 - Promote independence.
 - Expand access to long-term services and supports.
 - Address national needs and priority areas.

You will allocate at least 35% of the total annual federal award to the subaward program each year.

- Explain how the subaward program will support community-based organizations.
- Explain how funded activities will improve quality of life, reduce barriers to health and community living, and promote independence, choice, and community integration.

You will publicize the subaward opportunity nationally to reach eligible applicants.

- Explain your:
 - Outreach strategies.
 - Eligibility standards.
 - Selection criteria.
 - Review procedures.

- Decision-making process.
- Steps to ensure the process is open, fair, transparent, and inclusive. You will monitor the subrecipients after the award.
- Include your approach to:
 - Financial oversight.
 - Performance tracking.
 - Reporting.
 - Technical assistance.
 - Ongoing support to help subrecipients carry out funded activities successfully and achieve lasting results.

You will ensure that subawards comply with all program rules and federal requirements.

- This includes ensuring that subawards funds:
 - Are spent within 12 months.
 - Are not used for medical services or fundraising.
 - Are managed in accordance with applicable federal subrecipient monitoring requirements.

Table: Scoring criteria

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates how the applicant will allocate at least 35% of total annual federal funds through an open and competitive national subaward process. (2 points) • Clearly describes the competitive process, including outreach strategies, selection criteria, review procedures, and steps to ensure fairness and inclusiveness. (2 points) • Describes how the applicant will monitor and support subrecipients including financial oversight, performance tracking, technical assistance, and support for long-term success. (2 points) • Explains how the applicant will follow program rules and federal requirements, including that subawards may not be used for medical services or fundraising and must be spent within 12 months. (2 points) 	8 points

Increase individual independence and participation through peer support programs (6 points)

You will describe how you will operate a nationwide peer support program for people living with paralysis and their caregivers.

- Explain your peer support approach. Including how you will:
 - Recruit and retain volunteer peer mentors from across the county.
 - Establish quality standards.
 - Provide training and support and identify and address gaps in available peer support.

You will maintain a directory of peer support groups and mentors and how you will connect people based on their preferences, needs and circumstances.

- Explain how you will ensure timely access to peer support for people and their caregivers.
- You will describe how peer support activities will strengthen independence, self-advocacy, and community participation.

Table: Scoring criteria

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes a nationwide peer support model, including recruitment, retention, matching, quality standards, training, and strategies to address gaps in support. (2 points) • A clear plan to ensure timely access to peer support for people living with paralysis and their caregivers. (2 points) • An approach to maintain a directory of peer support groups and mentors and connect people based on their preferences and needs. (1 point) • Evidence that peer support activities will strengthen independence, self-advocacy, and community participation. (1 point) 	6 points

Conduct ongoing promotional activities and outreach to increase visibility and use of NPRC resources (5 points)

Describe Promotional Activities and Outreach strategies that will give the NPRC broad national visibility, public awareness, and use of NPRC resources.

- Explain how your dissemination activities will promote transparency and increase awareness of, and confidence in, the NPRC as a trusted national resource.
- Explain how you will share project results, materials and resources with audiences across the country using communication methods that are accessible and delivered on time.

- These methods may include websites, social media, webinars, conferences, print materials and partner networks nationwide.
- Explain how dissemination methods, messages, formats, and languages will be tailored to the needs of the target audiences identified elsewhere in the narrative.
- This should include [underserved and service-limited populations](#).
- The narrative must show how your outreach strategy will support the use of NPRC resources by people living with paralysis, their families, caregivers, professionals, community-based organizations, and other partners.
 - It must also show how information will be accessible, relevant, and written in plain language.
- You will describe a coordinated national outreach approach that includes co-branding with ACL, digital outreach, conference participation, and outreach to people who are not connected to services.
- You will explain how partner organizations and networks will help expand the reach and increase national awareness and use of NPRC resources.
- You will describe how you will share information about project performance and results with the public.
 - This includes your plan to create and maintain a publicly available dashboard beginning in year two of the grant.
 - The dashboard will report on at least one key program output and outcome.
 - You will explain what information will be shown at launch, how often it will be updated, and how it will support transparency, accountability, and public understanding of project performance.

Table: Scoring criteria

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear and feasible plan to share information about the NPRC and its resources. (1 point) • Identifies the appropriate audiences and tailors messages and formats to meet their needs. (1 point) • Provides a strong national outreach plan to increase awareness and share NPRC resources and project results. (1 point) • Includes a plan to launch a public dashboard in year two that shows at least one key output and one outcome. (2 points) 	<p>5 points</p>

Collaboration and partnerships with relevant organizations

(5 points)

Describe the key partners you will work with on this project and explain how those partnerships will support project goals and required activities.

- Include each key partnership, the role they play, and how they will contribute to outreach, service delivery, subawards, and evaluation.
 - You will work with partners to share information, identify barriers, and address those barriers together.
- Describe how you will work with ACL funded programs and other national partners as appropriate.
 - For each key partner, describe:
 - The roles and responsibilities they will play.
 - The activities they will support.
 - How they will contribute to successful project implementation.
- Include letters of commitment from key partners.
 - These letters must clearly describe the roles and responsibilities and show that each partner has the ability and commitment to remain involved throughout the full project.

ACL funded partners include, but are not limited to:

- Centers for Independent Living.
- Assistive Technology programs.
- Area Agencies on Aging.
- Protection and Advocacy systems.
- NIDILRR Model Systems.
- UCEDDs.
- Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs

Table: Scoring criteria

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly describes how partnerships will support project goals and required activities and successful project implementation. (2 points) • Includes letters of commitment from key partners that clearly describe roles and responsibilities. (2 points) • Shows that key partners have the ability and commitment to stay involved throughout the project period. (1 point) 	5 points

Project impact (20 points)

Project outcomes (12 points)

You will identify clear, measurable, and meaningful outcomes for the project.

- These outcomes should show how the project:
 - Improved independence, self-confidence, informed decision-making, and community participation.
 - Reduced barriers.
 - Expanded reach.
 - Improved transparency for people living with paralysis and their support networks.
- Outcomes should also show how the project will reduce barriers to health and community living.

You will clearly explain the difference between outcomes and outputs.

- **Outcomes** are observable changes or benefits that result from the project.
- **Outputs** are the activities, services, or products the project delivers.

Your outcomes should support the purpose of the NPRC and [all six required activity areas](#). This includes how these outcomes will benefit people living with paralysis and their support networks.

Table: Scoring criteria

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies clear, measurable, and meaningful outcomes. (3 points) • Shows that outcomes support all six required activity areas. (3 points) • Clearly distinguishes outcomes from outputs. (3 points) • Shows the project is likely to benefit people living with paralysis and their support networks. (3 points) 	12 points

Evaluation (8 points)

You will present an evaluation plan that includes both process evaluation and outcome evaluation.

- Include a performance and reporting system for tracking results across the project.
- The evaluation plan must address [all six required activities](#), including subaward activities. Assess:
 - Whether activities are carried out as planned.

- Identify barriers and areas for improvement.
- Measure progress toward expected results.
- Assess the overall impact of the project.
- Explain what information you will track across all program areas, including inputs, outputs, and outcomes.
- Describe how your performance and reporting system will show how federal funding supports project activities, outputs, and outcomes including subaward activities.
- The performance and reporting system must support public reporting, including the [dashboard](#).
- Describe the measures you will use and how you will collect, manage, and analysis across all program areas.
- Explain how:
 - Findings will be reviewed regularly.
 - Reported to ACL twice a year.
 - Used to improve services and strengthen effective strategies.
 - They will improve over time.

Include a logic model as an attachment.

Table: Scoring criteria

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a clear process and outcome evaluation plan that addresses all six required activity areas including subaward activities. (2 points) • Describes a performance and reporting system that shows how federal funding supports project activities, outputs, and outcomes, including subaward activities. (2 points) • Describes appropriate measures and methods for data collection methods, data management, and analysis methods to track implementation and results across all program areas. (2 points) • Explains how findings will be used to reviewed regularly, reported to ACL twice a year, and used to improve the project over time. (2 points) 	8 points

Organizational capability and expertise (20 points)

Documented national and local-level capacity (8 points)

- Provide evidence that you have the experience and capacity to operate at the national level to serve people living with paralysis and related disability communities.
 - You will describe your experience working with these populations and your ability to provide services on a national scale.
- Describe your organizational structure, financial management systems, and data systems.
- Explain how these systems will support effective implementation of the project.
- Describe your national reach and your ability to coordinate activities across states, communities, and partner organizations.
- Describe your experience managing federal cooperative agreements.
- Describe your ability to administer, monitor and oversee a competitive national subaward program in compliance with federal requirements.
- Show that you are prepared to track financial and performance data.
- Show that you are able to manage subawards and meet all applicable reporting and oversight responsibilities.

Table: Scoring criteria

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows experience and capacity to operate a national center serving people living with paralysis and related disability communities. (2 points) • Demonstrates experience working with people living with paralysis and related disability. (2 points) • Clearly describes organizational structure, operational infrastructure, financial management systems and data systems needed to operate effectively. (2 points) • Shows experience and the ability to manage federal grants and administer and monitor a competitive subaward program in compliance with federal requirements. (2 points) 	8 points

Experience of the project team (6 points)

You must show that proposed leadership and key personnel have the experience and qualifications needed to run the project successfully.

- Describe their relevant experience in paralysis and disability services, national program administration.

- Describe their experience with subaward management, performance tracking, evaluation, and outreach.
- Show that staffing levels, assigned roles, and time commitments are sufficient to support effective project implementation and completion of activities on time.
- Attach resumes or job descriptions, as required.

Table: Scoring criteria

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows that project leadership and staff have experience and qualifications needed for the work. (2 points) • Demonstrates the ability to run a national subaward program and track subaward funds and outcomes. (2 points) • Shows that staffing levels, assigned roles, and staff time commitments are sufficient to implement the project effectively and complete activities on time. (2 points) 	6 points

Management plan (3 points)

- Provide a realistic management plan for the full three-year project period.
 - The management plan must clearly show how activities and action steps will lead to the intended outcomes.
 - It must also clearly show how the work will move forward each budget period.
- Describe the project's management structure, including day-to-day leadership, staff roles and responsibilities.
- Explain how you will begin work promptly after award.
- Explain how you will manage, track and oversee progress towards the project's goals and objectives.

Table: Scoring criteria

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly defines roles, responsibilities, and reporting relationships, including subaward oversight. (1 point) • Identifies a realistic approach for day-to-day management, prompt start-up after award, and implementation across each budget period. (1 point) • Demonstrates a clear plan to manage, track, analyze, and report progress toward goals, objectives, and intended outcomes across all program areas. (1 point) 	3 points

Work plan (3 points)

You must provide a work plan for your project.

The work plan connects your period of performance outcomes, strategies and activities, and measures. It provides more detail on how you will measure outcomes and processes.

To create your work plan:

- Use the [Project Work Plan Sample Template](#) on our website.
- Include the project's overall goal, expected outcomes, key objectives, and the major action steps needed to achieve them.
- For each major action step, include start and end dates and the lead responsible person.
- The work plan must include measurable milestones, responsible personnel, and clear timelines.
- The work plan should demonstrate readiness to begin implementation immediately upon award.
- Show how activities are sequenced across budget periods and how milestones connect to measurable outputs and outcomes.

Table: Scoring criteria

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear three-year work plan that links goals, outcomes, objectives, activities, milestones, and measures to measurable outputs and outcomes. (2 points) • Realistic timelines, responsible staff, logical sequencing across budget periods, and readiness to begin implementation immediately upon award. (1 point) 	3 points

Budget narrative (10 points)

Page limit: None

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

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

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

When you develop your budget narrative:

- We encourage you to use the [ACL Budget Narrative Sample Format \[PDF\]](#). This format shows the level of detail we are looking for in your application.
- Justify all the costs and show how you calculated them.
- You will need to create a budget narrative that shows all years combined along with separate, detailed budget narratives for each year.
- You should demonstrate that staffing and financial oversight are sufficient to manage a \$10 million cooperative agreement.
- Submit one budget narrative for all years combined and a separate detailed budget narrative for each year.
- Reviewers will assess your budget (SF-424A) and your budget narrative to score this section.

Table: Scoring criteria for budget and budget narrative

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear and detailed budget and budget narrative that explains the costs in the SF424A. (3 points) • A budget with costs that are reasonable, clearly calculated, and tied to the proposed project activities. (3 points) • A budget that meets funding requirements and spending restrictions, including the requirement to direct at least 35% of annual federal funds to subawards. (2 points) • Evidence that the applicant has enough staffing and financial oversight to manage a \$10 million cooperative agreement. (2 points) 	<p>10 points</p>

Attachments

You will upload attachments in Grants.gov using the Other Attachments Form.

Indirect cost agreement

If you include indirect costs in your budget using an approved rate, include a copy of your current agreement approved by your [cognizant agency for indirect costs](#). If you use the *de minimis* rate, you do not need to submit this attachment.

Commitment letters

Include letters from any organization that will have a significant role in carrying out your project. The letter should explain their role and their commitment to the project.

- Describe the nature and scope of the collaboration (e.g., outreach, peer services, subaward support, technical assistance, evaluation support, dissemination).
- Confirm the partner's commitment to participate in a project or throughout the full three-year period of performance.
- Identify key staff involved, if applicable.
- Describe any resources, expertise, or in-kind support the partner will contribute.
- General support letters without a substantive role will not meet this requirement.

Proof of nonprofit status

If your organization is a nonprofit, you need to attach proof. We will accept any of the following:

- A copy of a current tax exemption certificate from the IRS.
- A letter from your state's tax department, attorney general, or another state official saying that your group is a nonprofit and that none of your net earnings go to private shareholders or others.
- A certified copy of your certificate of incorporation. This document must show that your group is a nonprofit.
- Any of these documents for a parent organization. Also include a statement signed by an official of the parent group that your organization is a nonprofit affiliate.

Resumes and job descriptions

For key personnel, attach resumes for positions that are filled. For positions that aren't filled, attach the job descriptions with qualifications.

Clearly identify each key staff member's role, percentage of time devoted to the project(s), and reporting structure. Staffing levels and time commitments must be sufficient to manage all required activity areas, including subaward oversight.

Other required forms

You will need to complete some other forms in Grants.gov. You can find them in the NOFO [application package](#) or review them and their instructions at [Grants.gov Forms](#).

Item	Page limit
<input type="checkbox"/> Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Key Contacts form	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Grants.gov Lobbying form (Certification Regarding Lobbying)	None
<input type="checkbox"/> Project/Performance Site Location form	None

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

Application review 47

Award notices 50

Application review

Initial review

We will review your application to make sure that it meets the responsiveness requirements listed in the [disqualifying 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.

We will not review any pages over the page limit.

Scoring process

A panel reviews all applications that pass the initial review. The members use the merit review scoring criteria in the project narrative and budget narrative sections of this NOFO. You can find the specific criteria in each section of the project narrative and in the budget narrative section.

Criteria summary

Heading	Points
<p>Project relevance and and current need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance (Problem statement) (10 points) • Goals and objectives (5 points) 	15 points
<p>Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special target populations (3 points) • Strengthen nationwide access to reliable information and tools, and real-time help (8 points) • Strengthen community capacity through state and local investments that improve quality of life (8 points) • Increase individual independence and participation through peer support programs (6 points) • Conduct ongoing promotional activities and outreach to increase visibility and use of NPRC resources (5 Points) • Collaborate and partner with relevant organizations (5 points) 	35 points
<p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project outcomes (12 points) • Evaluation (8 points) 	20 points
<p>Organizational capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational capability (8 points) • Experience of the project team (6 points) • Management plan (3 points) • Work plan (3 points) 	20 points
<p>Budget</p>	10 points

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 funding opportunity.

The ACL administrator makes all final award decisions.

Funding preferences for alignment with agency priorities

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 shows examples of proposed activities that align with ACL's strategic priorities, including connecting people to services, whole person health, and/or economic security.

Merit review criteria also include factors related to ACL's priorities.

Award notices

If your application is 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 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.

[See an example NoA on our website \[PDF\]](#).



Step 5: Submit Your Application

In this step

Application submission and deadlines

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Application submission and deadlines

See [find the application package](#) and the [application checklist](#) 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.

Application

Deadline

Due on July 16, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. 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 mail service.

Submission method

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 your application passes the Grants.gov validation checks. Do not encrypt, zip, or password protect any files.

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

Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs does not apply to this NOFO. You do not need to take any action.



Step 6:

Learn What Happens After Award

In this step

Post-award requirements and administration [54](#)

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 Administrative and National Policy Requirements \[PDF\]](#), 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.

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 subawards and subcontracts you issue for \$30,000 or more.
- Reporting executive compensation for both recipient and subaward organizations.



Contacts and Support

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Agency contacts

Program and eligibility

Elizabeth Leef

Elizabeth.leef@acl.hhs.gov

(202)-475-2482

Financial and budget

Nicole Dunning

Nicole.Dunning1@acl.hhs.gov

Review process and application status

Elizabeth Leef

Elizabeth.leef@acl.hhs.gov

(202)-475-2482

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 \(HHS\)](#)
- [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 \(U.S.C.\)](#)