

AUCD – Council on Research and Evaluation
March 3, 2021

NIDILRR Overview and Opportunities

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National Institute on Disability, Independent Living,
and Rehabilitation Research

Administration for Community Living / HHS
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NIDILRR's Evolution: 40 Years

National Institute on
Handicapped Research
(NIHR)

Department of Health,
Education and Welfare

1978

National Institute on
Disability and
Rehabilitation Research
(NIDRR)

Department of Education

1986

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

ACL/Department of Health
and Human Services

2014

NIDILRR's Mission

To generate new knowledge and to promote its effective use:



To improve the abilities of individuals with disabilities to perform activities of their choice in the community

To expand society's capacity to provide full opportunities and accommodations for its citizens with disabilities

Core Principles

Social Model
of Disability

- Outcomes = (Person x Environment)

Rigor and
Relevance

- NIDILRR optimizes the rigor of the R&D we sponsor, AND the relevance of the R&D to the lives of people with disabilities

Building the
Evidence Base

- The ultimate aim of all NIDILRR R&D is evidence-based interventions and products to better serve and support people with disabilities

What We Sponsor (Annual Budget of \$111M)

Research & Development

- Interventions and products to optimize long-term outcomes and community living among people with disabilities

Capacity Building

- Training early-career investigators – maintaining the pipeline of disability and rehabilitation researchers

Knowledge Translation

- Promoting the use of R&D findings by people with disabilities, their families, and other stakeholders

Breadth of Responsibility



Populations across the lifespan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children• Transition-age• Adults• Aging
Cross-disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical• Cognitive (incl. ID/DD)• Serious mental illness• Sensory
3 Major Research Outcome Domains	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health and Function• Employment• Community Living and Participation

Populations across the lifespan

- Children
- Transition-age
- Adults
- Aging

Cross-disability

- Physical
- Cognitive (incl. ID/DD)
- Serious mental illness
- Sensory

3 Major Research Outcome Domains

- Health and Function
- Employment
- Community Living and Participation

Funding Priorities

Field-Initiated

- Funding opportunity in a general area (typically one of the three major outcome domains)
- Applicants propose specific R&D topic(s).

Agency-Directed

- Funding opportunity specifies topic and delineates specific R&D tasks to be accomplished.
- E.g.: “Using Robotics and Automation to improve accessible transportation options for people with disabilities.”

Grant Mechanisms

- **Mary Switzer Research Fellowships**
- **Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training (ARRT)**
- **Field-Initiated Projects (Research and Development) (FIP)**
- **Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTC)**
- Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRP)
- Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERC)
- Model System Centers (SCIMS, TBIMS, BMS)
- ADA National Network
- Knowledge Translation Centers
- Small Business Innovation Research Grants (SBIR)

Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Projects (ARRT)

- Awards made to institutions of higher education
- Research training curricula are proposed by applicants
- Grantees must provide advanced interdisciplinary research training to post-doctoral fellows
- Peer-reviewed competition annually, average of 3 awards funded/year (1 in each outcome domain)
- Up to \$200,000 per year
- Five-year awards
- *Advanced Training in Translational and Community Engaged Scholarship to Improve Community Living and Participation of People with Disabilities -- UIC*

Mary Switzer Research Fellowships

- Awards made to individuals (rather than institutions)
- Approximately 6-7 fellowships awarded/year
- One-year awards
- Types of fellowships:
 - “Merit” - early career: \$70,000
 - “Distinguished” – mid/late career: \$80,000
- *Evaluating the Efficacy of a Group Intervention to Improve Workplace Soft Skills for Transition-Aged Youth with Psychiatric Disabilities. Jennifer Sanchez. University of Iowa.*

Field-Initiated Projects (FIP)

- Disability and rehabilitation research topic, methods, and target population proposed by applicant
- Awards may be for research or development projects from one or multiple outcome domains
- Approximately 150 applications/year (NIDILRR's largest competition)
- Approximately 15 awards per year
- Up to \$200,000 per year
- Three-year awards
- *Culturally Appropriate Research in American Indian Employment Programs – Northern Arizona University*

Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers

- RRTC's conduct multiple research projects
- RRTC's serve as “National Resource Centers” on specific topics
- Required to engage in research, as well as training, dissemination, and technical assistance
- NIDILRR may specify the general target population or outcome domain, or a specific topic that must be addressed
- Multiple RRTC competitions each year
- \$875,000 per year, on average
- Five-year awards
- Key RRTC's focused on people with ID / DD
 - Community Living – University of Minnesota
 - Health and Function -- Ohio State University
 - Employment -- VCU

AUCD Member Involvement in NIDILRR Grants

- 227 NIDILRR grants in FY 2020
 - Twenty-five AUCD member institutions have at least one NIDILRR grant. Many have two or more.
 - Approximately 30% of NIDILRR grants (68) are held by AUCD Member Institutions

AUCD Members are Prominent in Signature NIDILRR R&D Areas

SCI, TBI, and Burn Injury Model System Centers Programs (e.g. UAB, Indiana, UW, Wayne State, VCU)

Major RRTC related to People with Serious Mental Illness (Temple, UMASS-Med, UIC)

Technology for Accessible Exercise and Recreation (UAB)

Major RRTC related to People with ID / DD (UMN, OSU, VCU)

RRTC on Disability Statistics and Demographics (UNH)

RRTC on Disability in Rural Communities (U Montana)

Technology Transfer Center (Pitt)

Engage with NIDILRR

Learn about NIDILRR

<https://www.acl.gov/about-acl/about-national-institute-disability-independent-living-and-rehabilitation-research>

<https://acl.gov/news-and-events/announcements/new-nidilrr-long-range-plan>

Receive Funding Opportunity Announcements

<http://www.naric.com/?q=node/33>

Explore and Download NIDILRR Grant Opportunities

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?cfda=93.433>

Engage with NIDILRR - 2

Search NARIC to learn about NIDILRR-funded research in your topic areas

<https://www.naric.com/?q=en/ProgramDatabase>

Become an ACL / NIDILRR Peer Reviewer

<https://rrm.grantsolutions.gov/AgencyPortal/acl.aspx>

Application Review Information

NIDILRR's Annual Reports to Congress provide data on the peer review process:

<https://acl.gov/programs/research-and-development/nidilrr-annual-report>

Approximately 16% of NIDILRR applications receive funding, though this varies significantly across opportunities.

Summary – Get Involved With NIDILRR!

- Your expertise aligns with NIDILRR's mission
- All grant opportunities / competitions are fair and open
- The field needs you to be involved in knowledge creation – to support evidence-based interventions, products, services and supports for people with disabilities

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