Transcript: 3/3/21 NIDILRR Current and Upcoming Funding Opportunities Webinar

>> Katie Johnson: Hello everyone and welcome to our NIDILRR current and upcoming funding opportunities webinar. We would like to thank you for joining us today. Before we begin we're going to address a few logistical details. Because of the number of participants we're asking people just mute themselves, throughout the meeting. You can use our chat box to engage and ask questions of our presenter today. Rhonda will be moderating a Q&A panel. At the end of the meeting. So based on the questions you all are submitting in the chat. We encourage you to put your questions in the chat for our present er Phil. We have CART captioning available today. If you wish to access the captions you just click the CC button at the bottom of your screen to view the subtitles. If you wish to make the captions bigger or smaller, you can click on the CC button again and select settings. There's a new Zoom feature that also allows you to move the captions box to wherever you prefer to feel foe to adjust as needed. This meeting is being recorded and it will be available a few days following this event as well as a transcript from our captioner. So we thank you all for coming and I'm going to pass it off to Rhonda, the chair of CORE council on research and evaluation to introduce our speaker today.

>> Ronda: Thank you. As Katie said I am the chair on council for research and evaluation I am the research director at the NAU institute for human development and I get the pleasure of introducing Dr. Phil Beatty. He is currently the director of the office of research sciences within the National Institute on disability independent living and rehabilitation research otherwise known to many of us a NIDILRR. And he's been with NIDILRR since 2003. Phil joined us for the CORE meeting when we had it during the AUCD conference back in December and shared some of this information and we found it so interesting and beneficial that we invited Phil back and we're so thankful he's here and can join us and some of this he will be repeating from last time and some of that will be new. And with this, we look forward to future collaborations among our CORE membership. As Katie said, as you hear Phil talking about stuff, all kinds of ins and outs of NIDILRR, please feel free to put your questions in the chat box. I will be pulling them together and we can have some Q&A when he's finished.

So thank you, Phil, I'll turn it over to you.

>>PHILLIP BEATTY: Thank you for inviting me back, NIDILRR back to speak with you all. We really appreciate the interest and we love to, I love to tell the story of NIDILRR and to tell anyone about what we're up to and just the excellent mission that we have and the good work of all of our grantee's. As Dr. Jensen said he will be recovering some of the same ground, quite a bit of the same ground that I covered in December. But I do that just to kind of re-energize the discussion and really to convey to you all the real opportunities that we have together and to really emphasize NIDILRR and AUCD how our missions and how our work together really resonates so I want to start with that kind of discussion and then get into a little bit more about opportunities that are grant opportunities available this year and into the future as well.

So thank you for having me back it's just really good to join you today. And I do have a number of slides which I'll go through but I know we have plenty of time for discussion. Yes, please do put your questions into the chat box and I'll be here for as long as you all can be this afternoon to address any questions and get some good discussion going.

To get started I'm going to jump right in. Just a little bit of history of our agency to start off with, our organization was created back in 1978 with amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. We were originally called the National Institute on handicapped research. Back in the 70s. And we existed in the Department of health education and welfare which was the precursor to both the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services. In 1986 when those departments split, Congress placed us into the Department of Education with the 1986 amendments again to the rehab act and our name was updated to the NIDRR the national institution on Disability and Rehabilitation Research and then you fast forward nearly 30 years later in 2014, and Congress reauthorized the Rehabilitation Act and in doing so moved us to the newly established administration for community living in department of Health and Human Services of course.

Independent living was added to our name with this re-authorization and in 2015 we were just really happy to join our colleagues in AIDD. And many other organizations that were all working to promote strong community living outcomes among people with disabilities and older Americans. The move to ACL has just been really a great one for the entire NIDILRR federal staff and our portfolio, our group of 200 plus grantee's out around the country.

So with that, let's quickly jump from that history to our reason for being. Our mission, the NIDILRR mission is to generate new knowledge and promote it's effective use to first improve

the abilities of people with disabilities to perform activities of their choice in the community. And two, to expand society's capacity to provide full opportunities in a accommodations for it's citizens with disabilities. From the structure of the mission that was just on the screen, you can see that NIDILRR has long adhered to the social model of disability. And the social model is it's just the basic notion that disability is a function of the characteristics of the person. And the environments in which the individual lives and interacts. So that's an important part of who we are and what we do at NIDILRR.

Another NIDILRR core principle is that we optimize the rigor and the relevance of the research and the development activities that we sponsor. It's not enough that NIDILRR research is rigorous, it of course must also be relevant to the lives of people with disabilities and toward relevance, we have long supported participatory action, research methods, and everyone should know and this is something that we're really proud of here, we put our money where our mouth is when it comes to inclusion of people with disabilities in the research process and people with disabilities as partners in the research process.

As we evaluate proposals through our peer review process, one of the important criteria that proposals are judged on is the extent to which people with disabilities are included in the design of the research and other related activities that are proposed. So that's a big part of who we are and how we do things. Finally, we are an applied research organization. And our aim is to build the evidence base for interventions and products to better serve and support people with disabilities in the community.

With our budget of approximately 111 million dollar per year we sponsor three different types of activities. First is research and development towards interventions and products to optimize community living among people with disabilities. We also sponsor capacity building. In other words, training early career researchers to be able to conduct high quality research that's highly relevant to the lives of people with disabilities. So we have a number of training grant, we have a training grant mechanism and fellowship mechanisms that we realize our capacity building aims through. And we'll talk a little bit about that in a moment.

Finally, we fund knowledge translation activities. NIDILRR is a government wide leader in promoting the findings of the research and development that we sponsor. In our case, promoting the findings and the products and everything that our grantee's generate among people with

disabilities, their families, service providers and other stakeholders that are relevant to particular grants that are being conducted out in the field.

This next slide gives you all information about the huge breadth of responsibility that we have at NIDILRR. We are responsible for research that covers disability populations across the life-span research that covers all disability groups including people with physical disability, cognitive disability, serious mental illness, and sensory disability.

Finally we sponsor research into three major outcome areas or domains as we sometimes call them. These three outcome domains are health and function, employment, and the third and the ultimate outcome really is community living and participation. So our annual budget of 111 million sounds people large and it is really but when you spread those resources around to cover research and knowledge that's needed across all of these target populations and age groups and outcome variables of interest, it frankly isn't enough. So I'll say that. Moving on, I want to share a little bit of information about how we structure our different funding opportunities. On this slide you'll see that our funding opportunities exist on a continuum between field initiated opportunities and agency directed opportunities. With field initiated opportunities we may prioritize research and development in one of our three major outcome domains. Or maybe emphasize the need for research relevant to a specific target population. But then we'll leave it up to you as the applicants to propose your best ideas for moving the field forward within those broad constraints. With our more agency directed priorities, we'll be quite a bit more specific about the type or the purpose of the research and development that we're sponsoring. For example, in recent years we have published an opportunity focused very specifically on using robotics and automation technologies to improve the accessibility of transportation options for people with disabilities.

That was a quite direct and NIDILRR initiated opportunity.

The trend over time in my time at NIDILRR definitely and over the years the trend over time is that our grant opportunities have become quite a bit more field initiated in nature. So even if we know that we want the fund to research and training center on research with people with intellectual disabilities for example, we will purposefully write the opportunity in a way that gives a wide range of applicants plenty of latitude to propose research that they think will advance the field. And we do that because we want -- we want researchers across the country to be really engaged in our opportunities and we want all of you to see true opportunities in our

priorities and we want you all to see how you can engage with us on a regular basis with your excellent applications.

So we are again, we've had the trend of moving toward more field initiated opportunities over the years because we know that the true knowledge and the expertise lies with you as applicants and experts out across the country and we want frankly everyone to be engaged in our excellent mission and generating knowledge that can really be used to shape services and supports and for people with disabilities, that's really what it obviously comes down to.

So on to the next slide. This slide lists the grant mechanisms that NIDILRR uses on a regular basis to make grants and you all will be familiar with these, with many of these opportunities.

So they are the list here includes about ten or so grant mechanisms including Mary Switzer research fellowships, advanced rehabilitation research training grants those are the capacity building grants I mentioned a little bit earlier. Field initiated projects. Rehabilitation research and training centers, Disability and Rehabilitation Research projects, and the other grant mechanisms that are listed here including rehabilitation engineering centers model system centers, our important ADA national network is a grant mechanism and a program that's been part of our portfolio for a long time.

I mentioned knowledge translation earlier. We fund a significant number of knowledge translation centers that are in place to work with all of our grantees to help them as they push their research findings and their development products out into the real world for use by people with disabilities and other stakeholders. And then finally we have a small business innovation research grants program.

So I'll go through a number of these mechanisms with you and then we can talk more about any of the others that you'd like to during the discussion period. The first NIDILRR grant mechanism that you may be interested in is our advanced rehabilitation research training grants mechanism. With these training grants, institutions of higher education provide advanced interdisciplinary research training for post doctoral fellows. We hold competitions annually for these grants and we typically make one of these training grants each year in one of our three outcome domains. These are five year grants for about $200,000 per year. There's a, an example listed here of an ARRT grant that we just made a couple of months ago to -- in September to an AUCD member institution and the title of that training grant is advanced training in translational

and community engaged scholarship to improve community living and participation of people with disabilities. And again that's a new grant over at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Our 2021 opportunities for ARRT grants, those have opened and closed by now this year, but again, this is an annual competition and given that each of you are in a University setting, institution of higher education I think AUCD centers are perfect for these kinds of post doctoral training grants and you should as a group or individually you should think about looking into these post doc training programs and making them part of your individual institutional portfolios.

On this next slide is a little bit of information about our Mary Switzer research fellowships. These are unique in our portfolio in that the grant goes directly to the individual investigator and not to their institution. These are one year awards. Merit awards are for earlier career investigators up to 70,000 for one year, and distinguished awards are for mid to late career investigators at a level of about 80,000 for the one year.

We have understood from our grantees that these distinguished awards Switzer fellowship awards are sometimes used to help cover a sabbatical period. Again an example from an AUCD center of in this case an example of a Switzer award, the title of this grant which we made a number of months ago in late 2020, evaluating the efficacy of a group of, of a group intervention to improve workplace soft skills for transition aged youth with psychiatric disabilities and this is a grant at the, to a investigator, Jennifer Sanchez at the University of Iowa.

On this next slide I'll talk just a little bit about our field initiated projects mechanism and this as the name implies this is a truly wide open field initiated research or development opportunity. Applicants define the target population of people with disabilities, the outcome domain, the research topic, and every other detail of their proposed work. It's truly a field initiated opportunity.

And given the wide open nature of this call for proposals, it is our most popular. Each year that we invite applications for this competition we receive between 140 and 170 applications, and we have resources to make about anywhere between 15 and 20 of these grants per year. These grants are three year grants for up to $200,000 per year. An example of a recent field project to an AUCD member organization listed here as the title of culturally appropriate research in American Indian employment programs and that's a new grant at northern Arizona University a grant run by Dr. Jensen.

So on the next slide there's a quick overview here of our rehabilitation research and training center mechanism. Research and training centers conduct multiple research projects and sort of as national resource centers on specific topics and they provide training, technical assistance and dissemination out to people with disabilities, their families and other stakeholders. With these opportunities, with these RRTC opportunities, we are likely to specify the target population, maybe the outcome domain or a specific topic that must be addressed by the RRTC but beyond that we, again, they are pretty field initiated, we leave it up to you to decide how you're going to tackle those, tackle that framework that we have laid out in the opportunity. These grants are typically for 875,000 per year for a five year project period. It's -- I haven't listed it here on the slide but an interesting point about these grants and interesting administratively, and interesting in different ways for you as an investigators and maybe interesting in a different way for your Dean or your Provost, these research and training center grants are limited to 15% indirect cost rate. So the indirects are limited and more of the grant resources can go directly to project activity. So that's just an interesting little tidbit.

The examples that are listed here on the screen are research and training centers that are focused on people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in each of our three outcome domains and these RRTC grants are held by AUCD member institutions in the community living domain, the RRTC is at the University of Minnesota. In the health and function domain the RRTC is at Ohio State University. And in the employment domain the RRTC is at Virginia Commonwealth University. Just a sidebar here and I just want to mention that, you know, we are fond of and we're excited about the work that all of our grantees do. I'll tell you one that's really caught my attention and I would say our attention at NIDILRR and one that we're particularly excited about. Is the research and training center at Ohio State University, they are doing research in the health and function domain but what they are up to is really I think outstanding and they have met our call and they have -- they are conducting research to develop research measures, research instruments that allow researchers and maybe program administrators to interact directly with people with intellectual disabilities and to get directly from the source, directly from the person with an intellectual disability, get their assessment of their own health and their own well-being and that's a departure from what we understand to be common practice of using proxy respondents in health research for people with intellectual disabilities.

Again this center at Ohio State, they are doing research to develop an infrastructure to be much more inclusive and to be able to gather that kind of research information directly from the person with intellectual disabilities. So we're excited about that, and that work is ongoing.

On the next slide, and with that little bit of information about NIDILRR programs and grant mechanisms, I want to tell you a little bit more about the extent to which AUCD member institutions are involved in NIDILRR grants. And this is our most recent data in fiscal year 2020 we had 227 active grants. That means those are grants that received either new money or continuation money in fiscal year 2020.

Among these 227 grants we counted 25 member institutions, AUCD member institutions that have at least one NIDILRR grant. Many of these 25 grantees have two or more NIDILRR grants. Approximately 30% of NIDILRR grants are held by AUCD member institutions. On this next slide we really just want to make it clear that AUCD member institutions are prominent among many of our signature NIDILRR areas and programs. I'll start in the upper left hand corner of this slide and then go clockwise to feature some of these and so up in the upper left many AUCD centers hold at least one of our model systems grants, these are model systems grants that conduct research related to traumatic injuries, spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury and burn injuries. Again, many AUCD centers hold at least one of these if not more, including University of Alabama at Birmingham, Indiana, University of Washington, Wayne State, and VCU, among others. Moving around the circle here AUCD member institutions they have been national leaders to decades in research focused on community living supports and services for people with serious mental illness. Really, if it weren't for temple, UMass medical center, University of Illinois at Chicago and Rutgers, we as a field, as pa field of practice, we wouldn't have the variety of evidence based services and practices that exist today for this population.

So AUCD members are critical to that part of our portfolio.

Many AUCD member institutions are engaged in our rehabilitation engineering and technology development portfolios. For example, the University of Pittsburgh runs our technology transfer center. Which helps NIDILRR grantees transfer the products of their research and development into the marketplace, and into use directly by people with disabilities. Moving around now NIDILRR has a long sponsored research and training center on disability in rural communities in the University of Montana has led the way in that important area. We're

also proud of the leadership and the work that our research and training center on disability statistics and demographics has done over the years. That grant is at the University of New Hampshire.

Back to technology as we go around the clock here. The University of Alabama at Birmingham is a national leadership in R&D aimed at products, services and standards for accessible exercise and recreation for people with disabilities. Finally and obviously, AUCD centers run the highly influential research and training centers focused on people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and I touched op on those centers in the previous slide. The main point here there's a lot of overlap between NIDILRR grantees and AUCD member institutions.

But only 25 AUCD members, member institutions are currently receiving grants from NIDILRR and we would love to have more of you engage with us by sending in applications, by being in touch with us and asking about our opportunities and generally just becoming NIDILRR grantees over time.

So I'm going to begin wrapping up now and we can really transfer over into our discussion and open discussion on this next couple of slides I have a number of NIDILRR links and resources that you can go to. And on this slide there's just a few here. And you can go to any of these to learn more about NIDILRR. These are links to NIDILRR information on the ACL website. And a link to our long range plan for the years 2018 through 2023. That's a good gives you a good conceptual foundation about NIDILRR is all about and the kinds of work we're funding. The second box contains a link to a page where you can sign up to receive notifications whenever NIDILRR accomplishes a funding forecast or funding opportunity and the third box contains the link that will take you to all of NIDILRR's current forecasts and active grant opportunities.

I will say as we had he had into our discussion, that we have forecast all of the opportunities that we have and that we will have available in 2021. The application due date has come and gone for many of these opportunities. We are in the process of publishing our last eight opportunities of this fiscal year of 2021.

So keep an eye on this page of opportunities that's behind this last link on this page. And we'll be coming out with those last opportunities and I'll talk a little bit more about that in just a moment.

This next slide has some more links. The first box on this particular slide contains a link to our program database. Which is really just an excellent resource. It contains a lot of information about every grant that we've made since the mid 1980s. Our database of current and past grants, it's really once you get into it a little bit, it's easily searchable so that you can see all of the grants that we've made in areas that are of direct interest to you and your teams.

So please check out that, our program database at NARIC.com. The second box on this slide has a link to a website where you can go to sign up to be a peer reviewer for ACL programs in general. Including NIDILRR programs. You know, many believe that, and I do, that serving as a peer reviewer really gives good information about what it takes to become a successful NIDILRR applicant. So the experience is really beneficial. It benefits you in the way I just described but having your expertise available to us on our research panels is also a great benefit to the field. So please consider putting in your information and nominating yourself to be a peer reviewer for our opportunities and for our grant competitions.

So really beginning to wrap up now I just have another slide or so. I wanted to give you a little bit more information as potential applicants you all should check this out and get to know this information just so you know the contours of the field and the competition for our grant opportunities. So starting with this first item on this slide gives you our reports to Congress. Starting in 2017 we began publishing detailed information about the number of applicants for each of our funding opportunities and the number of awards we're able to make. Right now we have annual reports to Congress up on line for 2017, 2018 and 2019 and 2020 will be up very soon. The information about our data review processes it's in the opening pages of each report. And table 1. So when you look through these, you'll see that each year approximately 16% of NIDILRR applications receive funding. You will see this varies significantly across opportunities. So please take a look through these reports and beyond that, which is an interesting look into our process you'll see the reports highlight the excellent work our grantees have been doing over that particular year that's the focus of the report. To Congress and finally I just want to summarize and wrap it all up and begin our discussion by saying that we really and truly invite you to get involved with NIDILRR your expertise and the expertise of your colleagues aligns with NIDILRR's mission. I also want to say and I can't say this often enough. You'll hear me say it any time out and about, all of our grant opportunities are fair and open I say that because we only hear from potential applicants that they don't want to apply for specific

grants because they think that those grants are meant for specific institutions or that they are wired for specific investigators or applicants. While we very much value and love the work our incumbent centers do, I want to make it very clear that. None of our grant opportunities are wired each one is a fair and open competition. The only advantage to incumbency is really experience and involvement and the only way to get that experience and involvement is to jump in and submit applications. So I'm just imagining it and this is the second time I've joined you and we didn't have much of an opportunity to talk the first time, but I imagine that this committee, the core it can and really should be a hotbed of collaboration and even competition for NIDILRR grants even more so than it already is. So thanks again for having NIDILRR join you this afternoon and to kind of reprise the presentation from back in December during your big AUCD meeting. Any one of us at NIDILRR would love to join you any time to kind of get beyond this overview and to get into specific topics that you might be interested in, having a history of, or, you know, anything that you all might want to talk about, either I would love to come back or any of my colleagues at NIDILRR, depending on the topic would love to join you for any discussions beyond what we have time for today. So please, we would love to join you any time. So that is the end of my, what I wanted to present just as an overview of NIDILRR and kind of the true conceptual overlap between NIDILRR and AUCD.

I do have some, depending on the questions that you all have, I have some thoughts and some additional information about opportunities that are out there this year and I can talk a little bit about that. But Dr. Jensen I was wondering based on what I've covered so if you think there would be any questions you would think to be better to get to first or where would you like to go at this point.

>> Ronda: We have two questions that are in the chat and one of them is about interagency connections which I could talk about that and John C poses that and another question is about the ARRT program. Do you want to go into those.

>>PHILLIP BEATTY: Yeah, please, let's, any -- go ahead.

>> Ronda: A number of AUCD members receive grants from other federal agencies within and outside HHS. NIDILRR is actively engaged with many of these same agencies and NIHC and for everyone in the chat John has linked a brief highlighting this. He's asking can you talk about how those interagency connections influence your funding priorities.

>>PHILLIP BEATTY: Yeah that's a great question and I'm hoping we can unmute John when the, after I give a brief response and he can give us these thoughts on this too. He has a lot of experience with interagency work in particular. NIDILRR is the, the NIDILRR -- so one of NIDILRR's responsibility is to chair and run the interagency committee on disability and research. So that committee that interagency committee gives us the opportunity and the responsibility to be engaged with research funders from across the government and to really collaborate and share information with each other about what we are funding this year, what they are funding this year, how we might marry some resources in a particular year to really boost a particular topic.

What we -- yeah any opportunity that we make available in a given year it's based on the knowledge that we have of what our programs have generated so far but also based on what we know is going on elsewhere in the field. So we really strive to make sure that we're pushing the envelopes not just NIDILRR specific envelope but what we know is going on in the world generally and research funded by others.

Let me give you an example and this is I think just a really good example and this fits into the discussion about upcoming opportunities this year. So within a couple of weeks you'll see it in our forecast and you'll see that the full opportunity will come out very soon. We are going to be again releasing this opportunity for research into the experience, the pregnancy experience and outcomes of women with disabilities.

And this opportunity came about directly from an agency to agency collaboration that we had just this year or earlier this year with NICHD. We did a scan of the knowledge to get a sense of, you know, what's going on and what are the experiences of women with disabilities related to pregnancy and we found that much of the research that had been done in that area was either by NIDILRR grantees or NICHD grantees and we put out just within the last month or so, we put out a new brief based on our synthesis and scan of the literature. Let me see I think I have it pulled up.

>>John Tschida: That's actually the link that I put in the chat box.

>> Phillip Beatty: We are on the same page here this is just one example and there are others where we work with our colleagues across the government with similar missions and we gather all the information we can and then we put the call out to you to say help us out, let's generate more knowledge recollect let's generate services evidence based surfaces and supports that can

make this situation better. If you read this paper, and I hope you do, this paper on disability and pregnancy, it's pretty stark. I mean the disparities are wide and they are not good. And we need to do a lot better. And it's our belief, we exist because we believe that research is the antidote to tradition, and tradition has been really bad to people with disabilities.

So through research and through building evidence based information and services and supports, we can do a lot better. So yeah, so John I think we are on the same page. We do a lot of interaction with our colleagues around the government and with all experts in the field to figure out what, what's next, what's hot, what's to be prioritized and yep, tell us more, John. What else are you thinking?   Around this question?

>> John: Well, you answered it exactly how I was hoping you were going to answer it. We did not arrange this ahead of time. One of my goals certainly as executive director and we've started down this road, with the previous executive director bringing the three parts of our network closer together, the IDDRC's in particular which is why I brought up NICHD. But also the folks at general and child health, we know that there are times when you're connecting with those same project officers that we're working with and sometimes it's in the context of formal structures like the ICDR which you mentioned, sometimes it's informal based on common interests and it's just great to see those partnerships exist that we're working it on our side, you're working it on your side. It just makes those priorities and some cases more relevant, more timely based on the needs of the field and ultimately the needs of people with disabilities. Great to see.

>>PHILLIP BEATTY: I'm just reflecting on this a little bit more and we're now all of us are centrally tied to ACL that's where the funding comes from we're all ACL programs and I think it's important for you all to know the close relationships that exist within ACL. When we're getting ready to publish an opportunity for a research and training center, for example, the research and training center that I mentioned earlier that's now at Ohio State, where they are doing that excellent measurement infrastructure work. Before we publish that opportunity, we had really good and deep discussions with our AIDD colleagues and you know the same group of folks who work with you all to administer your grants and to serve as project officers on your grants. So we, so our opportunities are directly informed by their input and their knowledge about what your, what all of your centers are up to and what's going on in the field. So there really is a close interaction at the ACL level in particular around NIDILRR opportunities specifically. So lots of synergies and so again that's another reason that NIDILRR opportunities

should feel really natural to you all and feel right to you all because they are coming from the same place and the same mission, really.

>> Ronda: I'm going to set aside the ARRT question just a bit because we have another question that I think is going to be the same string of thinking that you were just talking on and we'll come back to the other one.

So this question is about the past two years there has been a DRRP competition around assistive technology to promote independence and community living and so the question is about it seems to not be posted or forecasted so do these competitions change from year to year and how are the topics chosen.

>> Phillip Beatty: It's a great question and yes the topics do change from year to year. And there are a number of variables in play that help us prioritize the opportunities that we're going to make available. So I will say, and this is I guess this is late breaking news. And it's still kind of an open question. This year we did receive an unexpected and this is a happy indication, occasion, and it's great we received an appropriation that was larger than we expect ed and some notes about how to use that appropriation from Congress. And so we are still working out the details on that particular pot of resource that we have received and we -- so there is -- there will be at least one more opportunity that is forecasted and posted most likely we're working out the details with our ACL colleagues and our intergovernmental were folks to determine what we're going to do specifically with that additional set of resources that we received.

So that is kind of a response to the question related to AT, but I'll tell you, until we can post it as a forecast to the public, I just can't say much about it. So I'm not being, I don't mean to be dismissive I'm just telling you what I can. And not everybody knows that there might be at least one more opportunity coming so that's something.

But in terms of prioritization, let me just say I know we've received a number of questions this year and we're still receiving them about our field initiated DRRP competitions. So again, we over the years we've held these field initiated DRRP competitions, these are competitions where we frame out the outcome domain so either community living, health and function, or employment, and then we leave it to you to submit an application for research or development projects and each year we have resources to open up those competition, that competition for either one or two, sometimes three of those outcome domains. This happens to be one of those years where we only have the resources to open up the field initiated DRRP competition in one

of our domains unfortunately. And this year we do have an opportunity that's open right now for the field initiated DRRP's in the employment domain.

But I can tell you with some confidence that we do not and will not have the resources for a field initiated DRRP competition either in the health and function domain or community living. So I know that's part of kind of the background to the question. In terms of prioritization of what we're going to fund in any given year, it's just an excellent question and there is a bit of an algorithm or just so many considerations that we have to make and I'll say that there's a general rule for us at NIDILRR and I told you about our annual appropriation of about 111 million. In any given year, 80% of that budget is accounted for by grants that we made in previous years.

So we are making, with 80% of our annual budget we're making continuation awards to grants that already exist. That leaves 20% of our budget each year that we have available to make new awards or awards that are starting that year and will live for X number of years into the future. Often we have to look to see which of our grants are ex-expiring and many of our grants have been so important to the field, such important infrastructure in the field that we are going to continue those in one way or another. We will evolve those opportunities and update them each time they become available, but this year, for example, we have a research and training center that is expire and it is research towards community living interventions. It's a broad field initiated priority, it was five year ago also. But we felt it was needed to keep an open opportunity in that area. So we used resources for this year to recompete that priority from five years ago to update it and recompete it.

And again, so many of our grants have become important to the field and that we need to, we feel the need to continue them. Another example from previous years, when our research and training center on disability statistics and demographics expires, or when our research and training center on disability in rural areas expires, it's going to be a pretty safe bet that we are going to in one way or another evolve those opportunities and recompete them. So within that 20%, many of our opportunities for new grants are going to be long-term continuations of important infrastructure that we've set out in the field. And that leaves an even smaller subset of moneys that we have available to create opportunities for truly new areas like for us the new area of research on the pregnancy experience and outcomes of women with disabilities.

And we have another new opportunity that is coming out within the next couple of weeks that I hope you take a close look at. It's a DRRP competition with the aim of conducting

research toward reducing social isolation and loneliness among people with disabilities and I'll say that the priority idea was borne out of the COVID experience but, and we've realized over the last year that COVID really puts a spotlight on and amplifies disparities that exist and true needs that exist in the field and this is one that really, really came to the forefront of our imagination and I think just the needs of the field.

So that, so we prioritize that opportunity again borne of the COVID experience and that will be coming out soon. It's a long kind of ugly answer to a pretty straightforward question, but that's what we wrestle with every year with a, with an appropriation that's remained pretty flat over the years. And that huge breadth of responsibility that I described to you. You know, it's tough to figure out which opportunities to make available and which, which areas of research are going to be able to do the most to advance the field and to really achieve our mission and again, promoting the very best outcomes for people with disabilities through research. And that's -- we try to max that out every year the best we can with limited resources.

>> Ronda: That provides us kind of that insider views into the decisions you're making on your end and some of the restrictions that you're grappling with all the time. We have a question about the ARRT and a technical question. So you mentioned it's a post doctoral fellowship. Can it also be used to support early career faculty?

>> Phillip Beatty: So I'll resist being long winded on this one and I think the answer, so this is, this program is authorized directly by our statute Title II of the Rehabilitation Act speaks directly to this program and it is to be a post doctoral training program. So I guess that's a bit of an answer. I think the rest of the answer might be up to you all as potential applicants. You know if you see early, if you see post doc training as part of your early career faculty training, if you have that kind of on ramp into faculty tenure positions, that kind of thing, I think you can make it work. If you can describe the way that you're training your post docs towards faculty inclusion at some point.

I don't know if that's a good answer but I'll say that what the ARRT program deft definitely is and must remain is a post doctoral training program.

>> Ronda: We have another question about being new to NIDILRR and the review process. So this question is for those of us who are new to the NIDILRR grant application process, do you have any advice for us on putting together a competitive application. For example, in a previous

grant application we received reviewer feedback that we interpreted some of the criteria differently than the reviewers had expected.

>>PHILLIP BEATTY: Yeah, it -- so whoever asked that question please feel free to contact me or the competition manager that sent you your feedback and we would love to talk more about that. We love to engage with applicants around these kinds of questions. I'm glad that the question, the person who submitted the question is definitely on the right track to focus on the review criteria. So the best advice and this is truly a grantsmanship advice, NIDILRR applications are evaluated on a 100 point scale. And those 100 points are divided by X number of criteria, somewhere between five and ten criteria. And you should allot your pages in your application according directly to the points that are available for those criteria. Again, that's an obvious place to start.

There are two criteria that are particularly important and this goes back to my earlier point about rigor and relevance. We optimize both at NIDILRR so the two most important criteria and they are the criteria that have the most points associated with them are going to be importance of the problem, you know, describe to us, describe to the review panel, why your proposed research project is important. And by importance we mean important to the lives of people with disabilities. You know, who is your target population of people with disabilities and why is this important in their lives. That's the very first criterion you'll encounter in any NIDILRR application.

The second, the one that comes right after that is about the quality of the research activities that you're proposing. So the rigor. And so that's often the rigor, the research activities criterion is often 40% of the points that are available to you. So that's going to need to be a big bulk of your application.

So that's, that's broad, general grantsmanship advice. Again, when it comes to the specific feedback you've received on an application that you have submitted, we would love if you think it would be useful please give us a call and we can talk more about that specific feedback. I don't have enough context for what that feedback might have been or how it came across. So anyway we would love to talk more about any questions you have about feedback you have received from us in the past.

>> Ronda: Is it appropriate for researchers to reach out with an abstract or page for any sort of advice on whether or not it's a fit.

>>PHILLIP BEATTY: We would love to talk to you about fit. And I think it's -- and we can do that. So as project officers we can engage with you and we can talk to you about whether this particular opportunity or that particular opportunity would be the best mechanistic fit, grant mechanism for the idea that you have. We can talk about that. What we, what we're restricted in is it our ability to get into too deep of a discussion about the substance of your idea or the methods that you're planning to propose and employ. Please and that's because as project officers we, you know, we work with you out -- we work with you prior to you submitting your application but we are also responsible for administering the peer review process. So to guide against -- I'm sorry to guard against potential favoritism or conflict of interest, we're -- we try to keep it and we need to keep it at arms distance when it comes to giving specific advice about the kinds of methods you might employ or the kind of sampling that you might do or how you engage with your target population, that kind of thing. That gets us too much involved in the substance that we are later responsible for evaluating. .

>> Ronda: There are no more questions in the chat. You said that you ended your presentation, you had a few other topics of advice.

>>PHILLIP BEATTY: Well, I did want to, I know there are questions and I, please definitely bookmark that NIDILRR grants opportunities page on grants.gov. As soon as we come out with a new opportunity, it will show up there. So check that often. Let me see the notes that I had here. I will say that our field initiated DRRP competition in the employment domain this year you know, we're I believe applications for that opportunity are due on March 29th so time is running a bit short there. But that is an open competition. We have a couple of rehabilitation engineering research center opportunities that are open right now and those just opened. I would -- I think there are real opportunities here for you all to engage with your engineering departments that at your University and kind of explore whether your University has rehabilitation engineering capacity or engineering capacity in the human sciences that could be pointed at a number of the critical needs of people with disabilities that are rehab engineering grants tackle. So I would urge you all just in your University settings to take a look alternate those rehabilitation engineering opportunities and opportunities for partnership across departments.

I will state those are rehab engineering grants are really, they are doing just excellent work toward technology solutions for people with disabilities and I mentioned that we've started listing

our information about our peer review processes and I'll tell you for the size of those rehabilitation engineering grants, they are rather large, some of our largest grants that we make, there's relatively little competition. So you know if you were to start, you know, computing odds and computing whether it's worth it to jump into a particular competition, again, if you can find capacity in your University or in your network of universities to tackle some of these rehabilitation engineering topics that we're putting out there, then I would say your odds are good, your odds with quite good, better than other opportunities. And this year, those rehab engineering opportunities are in two areas, the first is rehabilitation engineering, particularly to benefit people who are blind or who have low vision. And there's historically that center is engaged in R&D toward way finding technologies, both way finding outdoors and way finding for indoor environments which is a tougher nut to crackly, but I think we're almost there. We're getting much closer. So that's an example.

The other engineering opportunity that's open right now and just opened is one just generally related to wireless technologies and how wireless technologies can be designed with and used by people with disabilities to promote strong outcomes in all of our domains community living, employment, health, et cetera. So that's a thought that I wanted to share.

And I mention the others that are topical and the others that were just really excited about the newer ideas related to pregnancy and the other related to social isolation. I will say within the coming days you will see our opportunity for our national center on parents with disabilities. It's a long-standing NIDILRR center, one that we're really proud of. They've collected a lot of or done a lot of research, built a lot of knowledge that has truly led to progressive and thoughtful policy reforms around the country that really support parents with disabilities in their parenting -- well in their parenting, I'll leave it at that. It's just an excellent center that it's currently at Brandeis but it's an open competition for the next five years. Prior to it's existence at Brandeis it was a center out at an organization called through the looking glass out in Berkeley California and they are just an excellent resource. Anyway, just for interest and curiosity I would really encourage to you just so you know it exists, our center on parenting with a disability is just a great community resource, research based community resource you all might be interested in. So I think that takes me through the, some of the notes and some of the thoughts that I wanted to share with you all. I don't know, did any of those notes or thoughts lead to any other questions or --

>>Ronda: No one has put anything else in. Lots of thank yous. So thank you.

>>PHILLIP BEATTY: Of course.

>> Ronda: It was nice, thanks. I certainly, I enjoyed the insider view while you were sharing it.

>>PHILLIP BEATTY: And excellent questions and I love to share what I can. I can't share anything but I share as much as publicly available and just give everyone a sense of what's going on and I will say some of our grantees who have been associated with NIDILRR for a long time they kind of intuit these things but it's important for everybody to know what goes around our thinking for opportunities that are available. Anyway thanks for the opportunity just to kind of reform and chat and tell you about what we're up to but really just the main point the AUCD network is really strong and there's such an over lap between our missions and you know just given where you are in the expertise and the capacity that you all have I think it's a perfect fit. And I hope that some of this is generated some ideas and some excitement and/or you know at least curiosity to reach out to us and ask us more questions. And but then work together to submit applications again together or solo within your institutions or whatever the case needs to be. For any particular circumstance. So yeah, get engaged, join us, send us applications, we need your expertise.

>> Ronda: We need reviewers.

>>PHILLIP BEATTY: We need your expertise as reviewers but I was thinking long-term and even shorter term we need you in our portfolio. We need you to send us applications because you have the capacity and the expertise that fits right where our programs are.

>> Ronda: We'll have to look for a way to take a look for your opportunity to talk with the CORE and reminder to folks that the CORE's next council meeting is Thursday March 11 from 2 to 3:30 p.m. eastern time. Thank you. Katie, do you have any final or John AUCD words?

>> John: Phil if you could just one more time you do the great news and notes update that people may or may not be aware of that's not just publishing recent findings from NIDILRR grantees but also letting people know about relevant convenings that you hold about an agency but events that grantees might be having or even the ICDR that might convene around a topic that in many cases those would be of great interest to our community as well. Just the opportunity to sign up and if you could just hit that advertisement one more time I think that would be great.

>>PHILLIP BEATTY: Okay. So I think I'm still sharing my screen. Can you all see? This is the NARIC if you go to NARIC.com, you will see in the blue box right in the middle of the screen there is a place where you can go to sign up for, sign up to receive the weekly newsletter that John just described. Let me make sure I'm in the right place. Yes. Well, maybe not. .

>> Says news and notes from March 3rd.

>>PHILLIP BEATTY: There should be a place to enter your email address so you will receive this every Wednesday at about 11:00 a.m. it comes out and John just described it really well. Let me find it.

>> John: Left side there sign up for email alerts is that it.

>> Katie: In the blue box add my email and submit.

>>PHILLIP BEATTY: That is it, one stop shopping here. So in the box right in the middle you put in your email address there and you will automatically start receiving news and notes the weekly newsletter. Then right below that is another email listserv you can signed up for, it's we will send you an email every time we post a new opportunity to grants.gov that's what the hyperlink is right below or right at the very bottom of the blue box. There's two things to sign up for here right within a couple of inches on your screen. News and notes in the white box then right below is another sign up all you do is put in your email information and we will send you a note every time we post a new opportunity to grants.gov that way you don't have to jump in to grants.gov every day to see if there's something new. We reliably send out that note every time we update grants.gov.

>> MS. JENSON: Thank you, and thank you everyone for joining us.

>> Phillip Beatty thanks again take care everybody.

>> Thanks so much, bye everyone.

>> Thank you all, bye-bye.