

Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN). We may also notify you informally.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

**2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements:** We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

**3. Reporting:** At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multi-year award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as specified by the Secretary in 34 CFR 75.118.

**4. Performance Measures:** Under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), the Department has developed measures that will yield information on various aspects of the quality of the Training and Information for Parents of Children with Disabilities program. The measures will focus on: the extent to which projects provide high quality materials, the relevance of project products and services to educational and early intervention policy and practice, and the usefulness of products and services to improve educational and early intervention policy and practice.

Grantees will be required to provide information related to these measures.

Grantees also will be required to report information on their projects' performance in annual reports to the Department (34 CFR 75.590).

## VII. Agency Contact

**For Further Information Contact:** Lisa Gorove, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Room 4056, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-2550. Telephone: (202) 245-7357.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on

request by contacting the following office: The Grants and Contracts Services Team, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-2550. Telephone: (202) 245-7363.

## VIII. Other Information

**Electronic Access to This Document:** You may view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the **Federal Register**, in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) on the Internet at the following site: <http://www.ed.gov/news/fedregister>.

To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site. If you have questions about using PDF, call the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), toll free, at 1-888-293-6498; or in the Washington, DC, area at (202) 512-1530.

**Note:** The official version of this document is the document published in the **Federal Register**. Free Internet access to the official edition of the **Federal Register** and the Code of Federal Regulations is available on GPO Access at: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html>.

Dated: September 20, 2006.

**John H. Hager,**

*Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.*

[FR Doc. E6-15762 Filed 9-25-06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4000-01-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services; Overview Information; National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR)—Research Fellowships Program Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007

*Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:* 84.133F.

*Dates: Applications Available:*

September 26, 2006.

*Deadline for Transmittal of*

*Applications:* November 27, 2006.

**Eligible Applicants:** Only individuals who have training and experience that indicate a potential for engaging in scientific research related to the solution of rehabilitation problems of individuals with disabilities are eligible. The program provides two categories of Research Fellowships: Merit Fellowships and Distinguished Fellowships.

(a) To be eligible for a Distinguished Fellowship, an individual must have seven or more years of research

experience in subject areas, methods, or techniques relevant to rehabilitation research and must have a doctorate, other terminal degree, or comparable academic qualifications.

(b) To be eligible for a Merit Fellowship, an individual must have either advanced professional training or independent study experience in an area that is directly pertinent to disability and rehabilitation. In the most recent competitions, Merit Fellowship recipients had research experience at the doctoral level.

**Note:** Institutions are not eligible to be recipients of Research Fellowships.

**Estimated Available Funds:** The Administration has requested \$106,705,000 for NIDRR for FY 2007, of which we intend to use an estimated \$500,000 for the Research Fellowships competition. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

**Maximum Awards:** Merit Fellowships: \$65,000; Distinguished Fellowships: \$75,000.

**Estimated Number of Awards:** 7 including both Merit and Distinguished Fellowships.

**Note:** The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

**Project Period:** 12 months.

## Full Text of Announcement

### I. Funding Opportunity Description

**Purpose of Program:** The purpose of the Research Fellowships Program is to build research capacity by providing support to enable highly qualified individuals, including those who are individuals with disabilities, to conduct research about the rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities.

**Note:** This program is in concert with President George W. Bush's New Freedom Initiative (NFI) and NIDRR's Final Long-Range Plan for FY 2005-2009 (Plan). The NFI can be accessed on the Internet at the following site: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/newfreedom>.

The Plan is comprehensive and integrates many issues relating to disability and rehabilitation research topics. The Plan, which was published in the **Federal Register** on February 15, 2006 (71 FR 8165), can be accessed on the Internet at the following site: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/opers/nidrr/policy.html>.

Through the implementation of the Plan, NIDRR seeks to—(1) Improve the quality and utility of disability and

rehabilitation research; (2) Foster an exchange of expertise, information, and training to facilitate the advancement of knowledge and understanding of the unique needs of traditionally underserved populations; (3) Determine best strategies and programs to improve rehabilitation outcomes for underserved populations; (4) Identify research gaps; (5) Identify mechanisms of integrating research and practice; and (6) Disseminate findings.

**Priority:** In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(ii), this priority is from the regulations for this program (34 CFR part 356).

**Absolute Priority:** For FY 2006 this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3) we consider only applications that meet this priority.

This priority is:

**Research Fellowships Program:** Fellows must conduct original research in an area authorized by section 204 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. Section 204 authorizes research designed to maximize the full inclusion and integration into society, employment, independent living, family, support, and economic and social self-sufficiency of individuals with disabilities, especially individuals with the most severe disabilities.

**Program Authority:** 29 U.S.C. 762(e).

**Applicable Regulations:** (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75.60–61, 77, 82, 84, 85, and 97. (b) The regulations in 34 CFR 350.51–52. (c) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR part 356.

## II. Award Information

**Type of Award:** Discretionary grants.

**Estimated Available Funds:** The Administration has requested \$106,705,000 for NIDRR for FY 2007, of which we intend to use an estimated \$500,000 for the Research Fellowships competition. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

**Maximum Awards:** Merit Fellowships: \$65,000; Distinguished Fellowships: \$75,000.

**Estimated Number of Awards:** 7 including both Merit and Distinguished Fellowships.

**Note:** The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

**Project Period:** 12 months.

## III. Eligibility Information

1. **Eligible Applicants:** Only individuals who have training and experience that indicate a potential for engaging in scientific research related to the solution of rehabilitation problems of individuals with disabilities are eligible. The program provides two categories of Research Fellowships: Merit Fellowships and Distinguished Fellowships.

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

(b) To be eligible for a Merit Fellowship, an individual must have either advanced professional training or independent study experience in an area that is directly pertinent to disability and rehabilitation. In the most recent competitions, Merit Fellowship recipients had research experience at the doctoral level.

**Note:** Institutions are not eligible to be recipients of research Fellowships.

2. **Cost Sharing or Matching:** This program does not involve cost sharing or matching.

## IV. Application and Submission Information

1. **Address to Request Application Package:** You may obtain an application package via Internet or from the Education Publications Center (ED Pubs). To obtain a copy via Internet use the following address: <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/grantapps/index.html>.

To obtain a copy from ED Pubs, write or call the following: Education Publications Center, P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794–1398. Telephone (toll free): 1–877–433–7827. FAX: (301) 470–1244. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call (toll free): 1–877–576–7734.

You may also contact ED Pubs at its Web site: <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html> or you may contact ED Pubs at its e-mail address: [edpubs@inet.ed.gov](mailto:edpubs@inet.ed.gov).

If you request an application from ED Pubs, be sure to identify this competition as follows: CFDA Number 84.133F.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain a copy of the application package in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) by contacting the program contact person listed under *For Further*

*Information Contact* in section VII of this notice.

2. **Content and Form of Application Submission:** Requirements concerning the content of an application, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package for this competition. The application package will provide instructions for completing all components to be included in either the paper application or electronically using Grants.gov. Each application must include the required forms; an abstract; Human Subjects narrative, if applicable; Part III narrative; resume; and other related materials, if applicable.

**Note:** Part II, the budget section, is not required for this program and should not be included.

Applicants submitting a paper application or electronically using Grants.gov must place their Social Security Number in Block #8bSF 424 form in place of the Employer Identification Number (EIN).

**Page Limit:** The application narrative (Part III of the application) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. You must limit Part III to the equivalent of no more than 24 pages, using the following standards:

- A “page” is 8.5” x 11”, on one side only, with 1” margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.

- Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative. Single spacing may be used for titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.
- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).

The page limit does not apply to Part I, Application for Federal Assistance; Part IV, the assurances and certifications; or the one-page abstract, the resume, the bibliography, or the letters of support. However, you must include all of the narrative in Part III.

We will reject your application if—

- You apply these standards and exceed the page limit; or
- You apply other standards and exceed the equivalent of the page limit.

3. **Submission Dates and Times:**

**Applications Available:** September 26, 2006.

**Deadline for Transmittal of Applications:** November 27, 2006.

Applications for grants under this competition may be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site (Grants.gov), or in paper format by mail or hand delivery. For information (including dates and times)

about how to submit your application electronically, or by mail or hand delivery, please refer to section IV. 6. *Other Submission Requirements* in this notice.

We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements.

4. *Intergovernmental Review*: This program is not subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79.

5. *Funding Restrictions*: Applicants are not required to submit a budget with their proposal. The Merit Fellowships and Distinguished Fellowships awards are one Full Time Equivalent (FTE) awards. The Fellow must work principally on the fellowship during the term of the fellowship award. We define one FTE as equal to 40 hours per week. The Fellow cannot receive support through any other Federal Government grants during the term of the fellowship award.

We reference additional regulations outlining funding restrictions in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

6. *Other Submission Requirements*: Applications for grants under this competition may be submitted electronically or in paper format by mail or hand delivery.

a. *Electronic Submission of Applications*.

We have been accepting applications electronically through the Department's e-Application system since FY 2000. In order to expand on those efforts and comply with the President's Management Agenda, we are continuing to participate as a partner in the new government wide Grants.gov Apply site in FY 2007. Research Fellowships—CFDA Number 84.133F is one of the programs included in this project. We request your participation in Grants.gov.

If you choose to submit your application electronically, you must use the Grants.gov Apply site at <http://www.Grants.gov>. Through this site, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit your application. You may not e-mail an electronic copy of a grant application to us.

You may access the electronic grant application for the Research Fellowships Program at: <http://www.grants.gov>. You must search for the downloadable application package for this program by the CFDA number. Do not include the CFDA number's alpha suffix in your search.

Please note the following:

- Your participation in Grants.gov is voluntary.

- When you enter the Grants.gov site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site, as well as the hours of operation.

- Applications received by Grants.gov are time and date stamped. Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted, and must be date/time stamped by the Grants.gov system no later than 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. Except as otherwise noted in this section, we will not consider your application if it is date/time stamped by the Grants.gov system later than 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. When we retrieve your application from Grants.gov, we will notify you if we are rejecting your application because it was date/time stamped by the Grants.gov system after 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.

- The amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through Grants.gov.

- You should review and follow the Education Submission Procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov that are included in the application package for this competition to ensure that you submit your application in a timely manner to the Grants.gov system. You can also find the Education Submission Procedures pertaining to Grants.gov at <http://e-Grants.ed.gov/help/GrantsgovSubmissionProcedures.pdf>.

- To submit your application via Grants.gov, you must register as an individual. You do not need to register in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). The steps to register as an individual are—

- (1) Go to the Grants.gov Credential Provider Web page, <https://apply.grants.gov/IndCPRRegister>. Then enter the funding opportunity number.

**Note:** The funding opportunity number can be located when you search for this grant opportunity on [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/search\\_opportunities.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/search_opportunities.jsp).

- (2) Fill out the credential information to obtain a credential username and password.

- (3) Take the credential username and password and go to the Register with Grants.gov link to complete the registration at: <https://apply.grants.gov/IndGGRegister>.

(4) Registration for individuals is complete, once the Grants.gov registration step is finished.

- You will not receive additional point value because you submit your application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you submit your application in paper format.

- You may submit all documents electronically, including the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424), and all necessary assurances and certifications. If you choose to submit your application electronically, you must attach any narrative sections of your application as files in a .DOC (document), .RTF (rich text) or .PDF (Portable Document) format. If you upload a file type other than the three file types specified above or submit a password protected file, we will not review that material.

- Your electronic application must comply with any page limit requirements described in this notice.

- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgment from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. The Department will retrieve your application from Grants.gov and send you a second confirmation by e-mail that will include a PR/Award number (an ED-specified identifying number unique to your application).

- We may request that you provide us original signatures on forms at a later date.

**Application Deadline Date Extension in Case of System Unavailability**

If you are prevented from electronically submitting your application on the application deadline date because of technical problems with the Grants.gov system, we will grant you an extension until 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, the following business day to enable you to transmit your application electronically, or by hand delivery. You also may mail your application by following the mailing instructions as described elsewhere in this notice. If you submit an application after 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the deadline date, please contact the person listed elsewhere in this notice under *For Further Information Contact*, and provide an explanation of the technical problem you experienced with Grants.gov, along with the Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number (if available). We will accept your application if we can confirm that a technical problem occurred with the Grants.gov system and that that problem affected your ability to submit your application by 4:30 p.m., Washington,

DC time, on the application deadline date. The Department will contact you after a determination is made on whether your application will be accepted.

**Note:** Extensions referred to in this section apply only to the unavailability of or technical problems with the Grants.gov system. We will not grant you an extension if you failed to fully register to submit your application to Grants.gov before the deadline date and time or if the technical problem you experienced is unrelated to the Grants.gov system.

*b. Submission of Paper Applications by Mail.*

If you submit your application in paper format by mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier), you must mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the applicable following address:

*By mail through the U.S. Postal Service:*

U.S. Department of Education,  
Application Control Center,  
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.133F),  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.,  
Washington, DC 20202-4260, or

*By mail through a commercial carrier:*

U.S. Department of Education,  
Application Control Center—Stop  
4260, Attention: (CFDA Number  
84.133F), 7100 Old Landover Road,  
Landover, MD 20785-1506.

Regardless of which address you use, you must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark,
- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service,
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier, or
- (4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

If you mail your application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

- (1) A private metered postmark, or
- (2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

If your application is postmarked after the application deadline date, we will not consider your application.

**Note:** The U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office.

*c. Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery.*

If you submit your application in paper format by hand delivery, you (or a courier service) must deliver the

original and two copies of your application by hand, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address: U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center, Attention: (CFDA Number 84.133F), 550 12th Street, SW., Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-4260.

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays and Federal holidays.

**Note for Mail or Hand Delivery of Paper Applications:** If you mail or hand deliver your application to the Department:

- (1) You must indicate on the envelope and in Item 11 of the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424) the CFDA number—and suffix letter, if any—of the competition under which you are submitting your application.
- (2) The Application Control Center will mail a grant application receipt acknowledgment to you. If you do not receive the grant application receipt acknowledgment within 15 business days from the application deadline date, you should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

## V. Application Review Information

**Selection Criteria:** The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 356.30 through 356.32 and are listed in the application package for this competition.

## VI. Award Administration Information

**1. Award Notices:** If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN). We may also notify you informally.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

**2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements:** We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

**3. Reporting:** At the end of your project period you must submit a final performance report as directed by 34 CFR 356.51.

**4. Performance Measures:** To evaluate the overall success of its research program, NIDRR assesses the quality of

its funded projects through review of grantee performance and products. Each year, NIDRR examines a portion of its grantees to determine the extent to which grantees are conducting high-quality research and related activities that lead to high quality products. Performance measures for the Research Fellowships program include—

- The percentage of NIDRR-supported fellows, post-doctoral trainees, and doctoral students who publish results of NIDRR-sponsored research in refereed journals;
- The percentage of grantee research and development that has appropriate study design, meets rigorous standards of scientific and/or engineering methods, and builds on and contributes to knowledge in the field; and
- The number of publications per award based on NIDRR-funded research and development activities in refereed journals.

NIDRR evaluates the overall success of individual research and development grants through review of grantee performance and products. NIDRR uses information submitted by grantees as part of their final performance report for these reviews. Approved final performance report guidelines require grantees to submit information regarding research methods, results, outputs, and outcomes.

## VII. Agency Contact

**For Further Information Contact:** Donna Nangle, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 6030, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: (202) 245-7462 or by e-mail: [donna.nangle@ed.gov](mailto:donna.nangle@ed.gov).

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the program contact person listed in this section.

## VIII. Other Information

**Electronic Access to This Document:** You may view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the **Federal Register**, in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) on the Internet at the following site: <http://www.ed.gov/news/fedregister>.

To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site. If you have questions about using PDF, call the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), toll free, at 1-

888-293-6498; or in the Washington, DC, area at (202) 512-1530.

**Note:** The official version of this document is the document published in the **Federal Register**. Free Internet access to the official edition of the **Federal Register** and the Code of Federal Regulations is available on GPO Access at: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html>.

Dated: September 20, 2006.

**John H. Hager,**

*Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.*

[FR Doc. E6-15763 Filed 9-25-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

#### Overview Information; Technology and Media Services for Individuals With Disabilities—Research on Technology Effectiveness and Implementation for Children With Disabilities: Web-Supported Instructional Approaches Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007

*Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:* 84.327W

**DATES:** Applications Available: September 26, 2006.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: November 13, 2006.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: January 9, 2007.

**Eligible Applicants:** State educational agencies (SEAs); local educational agencies (LEAs); public charter schools that are LEAs under State law; institutions of higher education (IHEs); other public agencies; private nonprofit organizations; outlying areas; freely associated States; Indian tribes or tribal organizations; and for-profit organizations.

**Estimated Available Funds:** The Administration has requested \$31,063,000 for the Technology and Media Services for Individuals with Disabilities program for FY 2007, of which we intend to use an estimated \$500,000 for the Research on Technology Effectiveness and Implementation for Children with Disabilities: Web-Supported Instructional Approaches competition. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

**Maximum Award:** We will reject any application that proposes a budget exceeding \$500,000 for a single budget

period of 12 months. The Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services may change the maximum amount through a notice published in the **Federal Register**.

**Number of Awards:** 1.

**Note:** The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

**Project Period:** Up to 60 months.

### Full Text of Announcement

#### I. Funding Opportunity Description

**Purpose of Program:** The purpose of this program is to: (1) Improve results for children with disabilities by promoting the development, demonstration, and use of technology; (2) support educational media services activities designed to be of educational value in the classroom setting to children with disabilities; and (3) provide support for captioning and video description that is appropriate for use in the classroom setting.

**Priority:** In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(iv), this priority is from allowable activities specified in the statute (see sections 674 and 681(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)).

**Absolute Priority:** For FY 2007 this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet this priority.

This priority is:

*Technology and Media Services for Individuals With Disabilities—Research on Technology Effectiveness and Implementation for Children With Disabilities: Web-Supported Instructional Approaches*

**Background:** A number of Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)-funded projects have developed and tested World Wide Web-supported approaches for improving educational results for children with disabilities. In some cases, these projects have used generally available Web resources (e.g., newspaper sites, museum sites, and search engines). In other cases, the projects have developed specialized Web sites (e.g., simulation of learning environments, discussion boards, and strategy reminders) to improve student learning.

Web-supported educational approaches have a number of potential benefits for students with disabilities. The Web can support varied learning strategies and Web-supported activities can be designed to address different student needs. For example, they can provide supports to compensate for learning difficulties, sensory impairments, and academic skill deficits. Research on the benefits of

Web-supported approaches for students with disabilities is not entirely conclusive, however. While some studies have found the Web or some of its features to be effective in teaching and learning, other studies have not found the Web to be effective in teaching. We also have little information about whether Web-based resources that provide access for one population of students may create accessibility barriers for others (e.g., graphic features may not be accessible to students with visual disabilities, hyper-linked resources or graphic organizers may increase intellectual demands and thus create barriers for students with cognitive disabilities). Finally, the effectiveness of Web-supported instruction in widespread use in typical educational environments has not been fully explored.

**Priority:** This priority supports a Center to conduct a systematic program of research on the use of Web-supported instructional approaches to improve access to, and participation and progress in, the general curriculum for students with disabilities. In carrying out its research, the Center must apply the principles of universal design (i.e., design of products that will be usable by children with different disabilities, to the greatest extent possible, with minimal need for additional adaptations).

In their applications, applicants must—

(a) Propose an operational definition of Web-supported instructional approaches to be used in a program of research;

(b) Describe their access to existing Web-supported instructional materials that will allow the Center to proceed quickly with the research without substantial time devoted to additional development;

(c) Demonstrate knowledge of the state of practice in terms of use of products, sources of products, and research on the use of the Web to support instruction;

(d) Present a plan for conducting a program of research to answer the following questions: (1) Do Web-supported instructional approaches improve learning of academic content for students with disabilities in actual educational settings with typical resources and levels of teacher support? (2) What characteristics of Web-supported instruction facilitate or impede access to and learning of academic content for students with disabilities? (3) What student characteristics (e.g., disability, technology skills) and contextual factors (e.g., teacher training, hardware