

Retirement and Disability Research Consortium (RDRC) Funding opportunity

**Informational Webinar
March 8, 2023**



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Overview

- Overview of the RDRC and application scoring (*Matt Messel, Office of Research, Evaluation, and Statistics*)
- How to apply on Grants.gov and developing a budget proposal (*Anita OBrien, Office of Acquisitions and Grants*)
- Dates, links, and questions



RDRC: A federal research cooperative agreement program

- Purpose:
 - Focuses on topics related to retirement and disability policy
 - Foundational and focal research
 - Research for the public benefit, no policy advocacy
 - Supports research, evaluation, and data development with a public benefit
 - Communicates findings through websites, newsletters, and an annual meeting
 - Trains the next generation of scholars in research and policy analysis



RDRC: A federal research cooperative agreement program

- Funding:
 - 5-year cooperative agreement with SSA—October 2023 to September 2028
 - About \$12 million in FY2023 for one or more research centers



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What is an RDRC research center?

- A university, another organization, or a collaboration among institutions
- Key senior research staff and at least one director with demonstrated experience in behavioral and social sciences
- Administrative staff who coordinate research, training, and dissemination activities
- An evolving team of researchers who propose and conduct annual projects



How can you become involved?

- Apply to be an RDRC research center
- In future years, partner with RDRC research centers:
 - Submit your research project proposal to an RDRC research center (2024-2027)
 - RDRC Focal Research Memo released around *February*
 - Research project proposals due to SSA in *June*
 - Projects awarded by *September 30*, deliverables due to SSA within 1 year
 - Encourage your students to apply for research training and funding opportunities:
 - <https://www.ssa.gov/policy/about/research-funding.html>



Application scoring components (100 points)

1. Background Analysis (10 Points)

Primary research themes of proposed center (20 pages maximum)

2. Research Prospectus (50 points)

Five-year research agenda with first year project proposals (5 pages maximum per project)

3. Dissemination Prospectus (10 points)

Strategies for communicating findings to public, research, and policy communities

4. Training Prospectus (15 points)

Training activities for undergraduates, graduate students, and postgraduates

5. Staffing Proposal (15 points)

Center's organizational structure and CVs of key staff

100 total points



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	<u>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion</u> Based on <i>Project Narrative</i>	<u>Institutional Diversity</u> Based on <i>Budget Narrative</i>	<u>Basic Proposal</u>
1. Background Analysis (10 Points)	5 points		5 points
2. Research Prospectus (50 points)	10 points	10 points	30 points
3. Dissemination Prospectus (10 points)	5 points		5 points
4. Training Prospectus (15 points)	5 points	5 points	5 points
5. Staffing Proposal (15 points)		5 points	10 points
100 total points	25 points	20 points	55 points



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Institutional Diversity Metrics

- Institutional diversity metrics are based on the proposed first year budget that is allocated to non-R1 Historically Black Colleges (HBCUs) and Universities and other Institutions Serving Students of Color (ISSCs/MSIs).
 - R1 institutions are defined as doctoral universities with “very high research activity” and are based on the 2021 Carnegie classification.
 - HBCUs and ISSCs are listed in the Department of Education’s 2022 eligibility matrix.
- Include the information for these metrics in the *Budget Narrative*.



Background analysis of key retirement and disability policy issues and trends

Background Analysis

Research Prospectus

Dissemination Prospectus

Training Proposal

Staffing Proposal

Main Highlights

We will score the background analysis discussion of *equity issues* relating to SSA program populations (5 points)

- Equity in Social Security program, health, and economic outcomes
- By race and ethnicity, sex, disability status, and other factors
- Identify structural barriers



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Research Agenda, first year project proposals, researcher diversity

Background Analysis

Research Prospectus

Dissemination Prospectus

Training Proposal

Staffing Proposal

Main Highlights

We will score how applicants incorporate *equity-related analyses* into 5-year research agenda and first year project proposals (5 points)

- Diverse methodological approaches
- Investigate structural barriers



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Research Agenda, first year project proposals, researcher diversity

Background Analysis

Research Prospectus

Dissemination Prospectus

Training Proposal

Staffing Proposal

Main Highlights

We will score the applicant's strategic plan for a *diverse research network* (5 points)

- Diverse academic disciplines
- Inclusion of underrepresented scholars (e.g., people of color, women, people with disabilities)



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Research Agenda, first year project proposals, researcher diversity

Background Analysis

Research Prospectus

Dissemination Prospectus

Training Proposal

Staffing Proposal

Main Highlights

- We will assign points based on the proportion of the proposed budget for first year research projects that is allocated to PIs based at non-R1 HBCUs and other non-R1 ISSC/MSIs.

	≤ 5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	≥ 15
Percent											
Points	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10



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Disseminate research findings, connect with communities

Background Analysis

Research Prospectus

Dissemination Prospectus

Training Proposal

Staffing Proposal

Main Highlights

- We will score an applicant's strategic plan to leverage and incorporate **community relationships** into their research dissemination strategy (5 points).
 - Use best practices in community engagement
 - Communities facing structural barriers



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Train the next generation, include underrepresented scholars

Background Analysis

Research Prospectus

Dissemination Prospectus

Training Proposal

Staffing Proposal

Main Highlights

- We will score an applicant's strategic plan to include **underrepresented scholars** in their training programs (5 points)
- We will assign 5 points to applicants with a proposed training program **administered by or in collaboration with a non-R1 HBCU or other non-R1 ISSC/MSI**



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Describe the organization of the center, identify personnel

Background Analysis

Research Prospectus

Dissemination Prospectus

Training Proposal

Staffing Proposal

Main Highlights

- We will assign 5 points to applicants with at least one center director or co-director who is based at a non-R1 HBCU or other non-R1 ISSC/MSI.



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**Retirement and
Disability Research
Consortium
2023 Application
Workshop**

**Anita O'Brien
Grants Management
Officer
Office of Acquisition
and Grants**



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Who We Are – Division of Programs Contracts (DPC)

Brenda Monch – Office Director

Anita O'Brien, Dionne Mitchell and Tonya Saunders – Grants
Management Officers

Sherie Flood and Delbert Strawther - Contractors



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Grants vs Cooperative Agreements

Grants

- Public Purpose
- Governed by terms and conditions of the award
- Scope is driven by Applicant and Federal Statute

Cooperative Agreement

- Public Purpose
- Governed by terms and conditions of the award
- Substantial involvement by the Fed and Selected Grantee

Contract

- Procure goods or services for Fed
- Governed by the FAR
- Scope is conceived by the Fed



How to Apply

▶ Grants.gov

- Register in Grants.gov and they notify your E-Biz POC (CFO and/or AOR)
- Find the Funding Opportunity by the Search Function. RDRC
- Create and Alert on Grants.gov

▶ SAM.gov

- Free Free Free !!!
- April 4, 2022, the DUNS Number was replaced by the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), or the Entity ID.



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More about Grants.gov – Register Early!!!

- ▶ Registering an Organization
 - ▶ Never applied for a federal grant
 - ▶ Register for free in SAM.gov
 - ▶ Register in Grants.gov
- ▶ New- Workspace Application
 - ▶ Allows more than one person to access their piece of the application at the same time.
- ▶ Need Help with Grants.gov
 - ▶ Support@grants.gov
 - ▶ available 24 hours a day 7 days a week excluding federal holidays.
 - ▶ 1-800-518-4726

Watch the Videos



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Grant Topics



Grants 101

Basics about the grant lifecycle & management



Grant Policies

Laws & regulations for federal awards



Grant Eligibility

Are you eligible to apply for grants?



Grant Terms

Grant-related terminology and acronyms



Grant Agencies

Federal grant-making agencies



Grant Systems

Tools & apps to register & manage grants

<https://www.grants.gov/learn-grants.html>

This link provides information about federal grants and how they operate. Learn Grant Terms, Eligibility, and Policies. This is a one stop shop if you are unfamiliar with Federal Grants.



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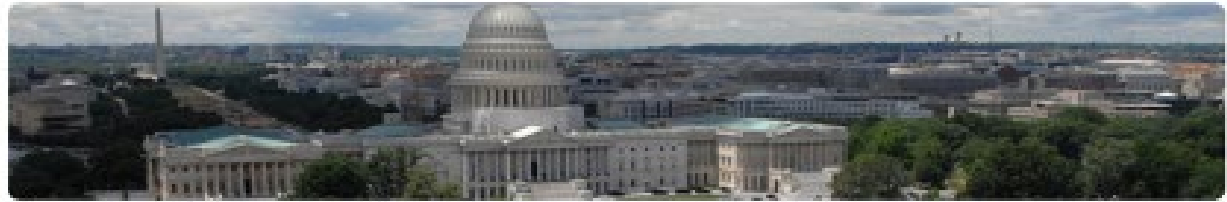
HOW TO APPLY FOR GRANTS

GRANT APPLICATIONS

- How to Apply for Grants
- Track My Application

APPLICANT RESOURCES

- Workspace Overview
- Applicant Eligibility
- Applicant Registration
- Applicant Training
- Applicant FAQs
- Adobe Software Compatibility
- Submitting UTF-8 Special Characters
- Encountering Error Messages



How to Apply for Grants: Getting Started



Learn

Go to the Grants Learning Center for an overview of grants.



Check

Make sure you are eligible before applying.



Search

Find federal grants that align with your work.



Register

Sign up with Grants.gov to apply using Workspace.



Apply

Complete and submit your application using Workspace.



Track

Enter your Grants.gov tracking number(s) for submission status.

<https://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>

This link provides a step-by-step tutorial on the Grants.gov application process.



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“Agreed. We fund only those proposals we can understand.”

Selection is based on merit and eligibility.



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Notice of Funding Opportunity/ Request for Application (RFA)

- A. Program Description – Required
- B. Federal Award Information – Required
- C. Eligibility Information
- D. Application & Submission Information – Required Info
- E. Application Review Information – Required Info.
- F. Federal Award Administration Information – Req. Info.
- G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s) – Required
- H. Other Information - Optional



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How to Apply

- Read the RFA.
- Will be done in the Workspace on Grants.gov
- Fill out all Forms and Upload Files (Word)
 - SF- 424 Application for Federal Assistance (Version 4)
 - SF – 424A – Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs
 - SF – 424B – Assurances - Non-Construction Programs
 - Project Narrative (Attachment)
 - Budget Narrative (Attachment)
 - Budget Spreadsheet (Attachment)
 - Risk Assessment Form (Attachment)
 - SF-LLL – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Do Not Leave Blank- N/A)



A Word About Budget Preparation

Code of Federal Regulations

Title 2 Grants and Agreements

PART 200 - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards

Subpart A - Definitions

Subpart B – General Provisions

Subpart C - Pre-Federal Award Requirements

Grant – Benefits the Public, Contracts the Agency

Subpart D - Post Federal Award Requirements

Performance Measures, Internal Controls, Budget Revisions

Subpart E - Cost Principles



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Budget Categories

Personnel

- ▶ show annual salary and percent of time

Fringe Benefits

- ▶ Based on actual known costs or approved rate
- ▶ Only for personnel listed in Personnel section

Travel... maybe

- ▶ Itemize for project personnel by purpose (Airfare, Lodging, etc)

Equipment

- ▶ Useful life of more than 2 years and costs \$5,000 or more

Supplies

- ▶ List by type: office supplies, postage, training materials



Budget Categories

Construction – not allowable

Consultant/Contracts

- ▶ Consultant Name, hourly or daily fee and time on project
- ▶ Contracts/Subawards – promote free and open competition

Other Costs

- ▶ List by major type – rent, reproduction, phone, janitorial
- ▶ If rent – give square footage and cost per square foot or monthly rental cost

Indirect Costs – Indirect Cost Rate Agreement or use de minimus – 10% of the Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC)

Match/Cost Share – **5% minimum for RDRC (of Total Project Costs)**



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Budget Analysis

- 1) Allowability
- 2) Allocability
- 3) Reasonableness



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Subpart E - Cost Principles

- ▶ 200.402 – Allowability of Costs
 - ▶ Necessary and reasonable for the performance of the Federal award
 - ▶ Consistent policies for federally-financed and other non-federally financed (Does your organization normally pay everyone \$1M?)
 - ▶ Consistent treatment. A cost may not be assigned to a Federal award as a direct cost if any other cost incurred for the same purpose in like circumstances has been allocated to the Federal award as an indirect cost.



SSA Grants



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Grant Categories

- Formula Grants
 - Money allocated by statute to the recipient, usually a State, using a formula. Entity must submit an acceptable application and comply with the statutory and regulatory provisions of the grant program. Also know as “block” or “mandatory” grants.
- Categorical/Project/Discretionary Grants
 - Support specific projects in accordance with legislation. The Federal agency selects the project, the grantee and the amount of the award. Examples are fellowships, scholarships, research grants, training grants, evaluation grants, and demonstration grants.



Key Dates and Important Links

Dates

- **April 21:** Letters of Intent (optional) are due.
- **May 12:** RDRC Research Center applications are due.
- **By September 30:** SSA anticipates issuing RDRC center awards.

Links

- **RDRC Funding Opportunity:** <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=346024>
- **FAQ Website:** <https://www.ssa.gov/policy/extramural/faq.html>
- **Focal Area List for FY2024:** <https://www.ssa.gov/policy/extramural/rdrc-focal-areas-FY2024.pdf>
- **Guide to applying on Grants.gov:** <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>



Questions

Please send your question to Grants.Team@ssa.gov.

We will post answers to your questions the RDRC FAQ website.



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