

The National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) is the federal government's primary research agency focused on disability, independent living, and rehabilitation, providing unique research and training from a disability perspective that brings innovative rehabilitation research to Americans with disabilities.

NIDILRR's Impact - \$119 Million Appropriated in FY 2024

In fiscal year (FY) 2023, NIDILRR funded 271 grants totaling \$112,533,118. Over the past few decades, NIDILRR funding has enabled more than 1,500 discrete research projects benefiting individuals with disabilities.

In FY 2023, NIDILRR grantees produced 641 peer-reviewed publications, 246 non-peer reviewed publications, 173 information products, 63 tools, measures and intervention protocols and 47 technology products and devices for people with disabilities.

As of 2023, NIDILRR has awarded more than 300 Switzer Fellowships to conduct individual disability research projects. NIDILRR's ARRT Program funds institutions of higher education to provide postdoctoral training, supporting approximately 70 research fellows every year.

NIDILRR's Grants Fund Projects Focused on Community Living, Health and Function, and Employment.

Investments in research, development, knowledge translation, and capacity-building activities are carried out through 11 discretionary grant-funding mechanisms, including:

Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs) conduct advanced research and training on a wide variety of health, rehabilitation, employment, and community living topics.

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) enables small businesses to explore feasibility and develop or evaluate the commercialization potential of new technology products for people with disabilities.

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs) conduct rehabilitation engineering research and development toward technological solutions to rehabilitation problems or environmental barriers.

Learn more about NIDILRR [HERE](#)

The Model Systems

The Model Systems are specialized research programs focused on improving outcomes for individuals with specific types of injuries or conditions, designed to generate longitudinal data, conduct clinical trials, and translate findings into real-world rehabilitation practices to improve care.

The Model Systems are the “Gold Standard” in Rehabilitation Research:

- Producing evidence-based practices that shape national standards of care
- Directly supporting community integration and independent living for people with complex injuries and disabilities

Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems

Conducts longitudinal studies, develops interventions to improve functional outcomes, and maintains the National SCI Database, the world’s largest and oldest dataset on SCI.

Burn Injury Model Systems

Conducts clinical research, develops interventions to address physical and psychological recovery, and maintains a Burn Injury Database, the largest dataset on burn injury.

Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems

Provides coordinated care, conducts longitudinal research, and maintains the National TBI Database-the largest TBI dataset - supporting recovery, interventions, and community reintegration.

NIDILRR at ACL

NIDILRR’s placement within the Administration for Community Living (ACL) reinforces its focus on community-based, person-centered approaches and ensures coordination with programs that support aging and disability populations. This alignment has:

- Strengthened partnerships between research, service delivery, and advocacy communities.
- Promoted integrated policy solutions across the lifespan and across disability service systems.

Maintaining NIDILRR within ACL affirms the federal government’s commitment to disability-led priorities, innovative research, and cross-sector collaboration.

We urge Congress to provide sustained funding for NIDILRR at \$119 million for FY 2026 and to affirm NIDILRR’s placement within ACL.