

§ 1330.4 Stages of research.

For any Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research Projects and Centers Program competition, the Department may require in the application materials for the competition that the applicant identify the stage(s) of research in which it will focus the work of its proposed project or center. The four stages of research are:

(a) *Exploration and discovery* mean the stage of research that generates hypotheses or theories through new and refined analyses of data, producing observational findings and creating other sources of research-based information. This research stage may include identifying or describing the barriers to and facilitators of improved outcomes of individuals with disabilities, as well as identifying or describing existing practices, programs, or policies that are associated with important aspects of the lives of individuals with disabilities. Results achieved under this stage of research may inform the development of interventions or lead to evaluations of interventions or policies. The results of the exploration and discovery stage of research may also be used to inform decisions or priorities;

(b) *Intervention development* means the stage of research that focuses on generating and testing interventions that have the potential to improve outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Intervention development involves determining the active components of possible interventions, developing measures that would be required to illustrate outcomes, specifying target populations, conducting field tests, and assessing the feasibility of conducting a well-designed intervention study. Results from this stage of research may be used to inform the design of a study to test the efficacy of an intervention;

(c) *Intervention efficacy* means the stage of research during which a project evaluates and tests whether an intervention is feasible, practical, and has the potential to yield positive outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Efficacy research may assess the strength of the relationships between an intervention and outcomes, and may identify factors or individual characteristics that affect the relationship between the intervention and outcomes. Efficacy research can inform decisions about whether there is sufficient evidence to support “scaling-up” an intervention to other sites and contexts. This stage of research may include assessing the training needed for wide-scale implementation of the intervention, and approaches to evaluation of the intervention in real-world applications; and

(d) *Scale-up evaluation* means the stage of research during which a project analyzes whether an intervention is effective in producing improved outcomes for individuals with disabilities when implemented in a real-world setting. During this stage of research, a project tests the outcomes of an evidence-based intervention in different settings. The project examines the challenges to successful replication of the intervention, and the circumstances and activities that contribute to successful adoption of the intervention in real-world settings. This stage of research may also include well-designed studies of an intervention that has been widely adopted in practice, but lacks a sufficient evidence base to demonstrate its effectiveness.