Program Announcement for the Defense Health Agency

Spinal Cord Injury Research Program Translational Research Award

Funding Opportunity Number: HT942526SCIRPTRA

Pre-Application Due: August 03, 2026

Application Due: November 12, 2026

This program announcement must be read in conjunction with the General Application Instructions, version CD26_01.

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Before You Begin

- **Active SAM.gov, eBRAP.org and Grants.gov registrations are required for application submission.** User registration for each of these websites can take several weeks or longer. Each applicant must ensure their registrations are active and up to date prior to application preparation.
- **Read this funding opportunity announcement in the order it is written before beginning to prepare application materials.** It is the responsibility of the applicant to determine whether the proposed research meets the intent of this funding opportunity and that all parties meet eligibility requirements.
- **To support application preparation, additional resources are available** including an application process FAQ, a Guide for Intragovernmental & Intramural Applicants and a CDMRP Video Series detailing the application process.

Who to Contact for Support

eBRAP Help Desk

301-682-5507
help@eBRAP.org

Questions regarding funding opportunity submission requirements, as well as technical assistance related to pre-application or intramural application submission.

Grants.gov Support Center

800-518-4726
International: 1-606-545-5035
support@grants.gov

Questions regarding Grants.gov registration and Workspace.

This document uses internal links; you can go back to where you were by pressing the Alt + left arrow keys (Windows) or command + left arrow keys (Macintosh) on your keyboard.

Click to be taken to additional guidance and instructions within the General Application Instructions (GAI).

1. Basic Information About the Funding Opportunity

Summary: The fiscal year 2026 (FY26) Spinal Cord Injury Research Program (SCIRP) Translational Research Award (TRA) supports translational research that will accelerate the movement of promising ideas in spinal cord injury (SCI) research into clinical applications.

Distinctive Features:

- This funding opportunity contains an **Early-Career Partnership Option**, which allows for two principal investigators (PIs). If this option is selected, at least one of the named PIs must be an early-career investigator. Only the initiating PI will submit a pre-application, but all PIs will need to submit full applications. The partnering PI's application is an abbreviated package specific to their distinct portion of the research project. If recommended for funding, each PI will be named on a separate award to the recipient organization(s). Be advised, all associated applications for a research project may be withdrawn if the initiating or partnering application is rejected or administratively withdrawn.
- Applications to this funding opportunity must name at least one SCI community partner (e.g., SCI Lived-Experience Consultant, representative of community-based organizations) who will provide advice and consultation throughout the planning and implementation of the research project.
- ****NEW for FY26**** An investigator may be named on only **one** FY26 SCIRP TRA application as a PI.

Funding Details: The Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) expects to allot roughly **$8.32M** to fund approximately **4** Translational Research Award applications with total cost caps of **$2.0M** for a Single PI, or **$2.16M** for the Early-Career Partnership Option, per award. The maximum period of performance is **3** years. It is anticipated that awards made from this FY26 funding opportunity will be funded with FY26 funds, which will expire for use on September 30, 2032. Awards supported with FY26 funds will be made no later than September 30, 2027.

Submission and Review Dates and Times

- **Pre-Application (Preproposal) Submission Deadline:** 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time (ET), August 03, 2026
- **Invitation to Submit an Application:** September 18, 2026
- **Application Submission Deadline:** 11:59 p.m. ET, November 12, 2026
- **End of Application Verification Period:** 5:00 p.m. ET, November 16, 2026
- **Peer Review:** January 2027
- **Programmatic Review:** March 2027

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: HT942526SCIRPTRA

Assistance Listing Number: 12.420

2. Eligibility Information

2.1. Eligible Applicants

2.1.1. Organization

Extramural and intramural U.S. Department of War (DOW) organizations are eligible to apply, ***including foreign and domestic organizations, for-profit and nonprofit organizations, and public or private entities***.

2.1.2. Principal Investigator

Investigators affiliated with an eligible organization are eligible to be named Principal Investigator (PI) on the application, regardless of ethnicity, nationality or citizenship status.

An investigator may be named on only **one** fiscal year 2026 (FY26) Spinal Cord Injury Research Program (SCIRP) Translational Research Award (TRA) application as a PI.

Single PI Option: Independent investigators at all career levels may be named by the organization as the PI on the application.

Early-Career Partnership Option: If this option is selected, ***at least one*** of the named PIs (Initiating or Partnering) must be an investigator with **at least three** years' research experience (independent or non-independent) beyond a terminal degree but **no more than seven** years within their first faculty appointment, or equivalent independent research position (excluding time spent on family medical leave). Lapses in research time or appointments as denoted in the biographical sketch should be explained in the application. ***The other PI*** (Initiating or Partnering) may be an independent investigator at any career level.

2.2. Cost Sharing

Cost sharing is not an eligibility requirement.

2.3. Other

Awards are made to eligible ***organizations***, not to individuals. Refer to the GAI for additional recipient qualification requirements.

3. Program Description

The Defense Health Agency Contracting Activity (DHACA) is soliciting applications to this funding opportunity using delegated authority provided by United States Code, Title 10, Section 4001 (10 USC 4001). The CDMRP is the program office managing this FY26 funding opportunity as part of the Spinal Cord Injury Research Program (SCIRP). The CDMRP is located within the Defense Health Agency Research and Development (DHA R&D), which is a part of the Department of Defense, DOD, herein referred to using the secondary title Department of War, DOW. Congress initiated the SCIRP in 2009 to provide support for traumatic spinal cord injury (SCI)-related research of exceptional scientific merit that has the potential to make a significant impact on improving the health and well-being of military Service Members, Veterans, and other individuals living with SCI. Appropriations for the SCIRP from FY09 through FY25 totaled $477.85 million (M). The FY26 appropriation is $33M.

Mission of the SCIRP: To fund research and encourage interdisciplinary collaborations for the development and translation of more effective strategies to improve the health and well-being of Service Members, Veterans, and other individuals with spinal cord injury

Vision of the SCIRP: Advance the treatment and management of spinal cord injury and ameliorate its consequences

The FY26 SCIRP challenges the scientific community to design research that will advance the development, translation and ultimate adoption of health care solutions for people living with SCI, their families and/or care partners. The SCIRP encourages impactful and well-reasoned research across the continuum of care, at time of injury and throughout the lifespan. Additionally, to ensure alignment with current program priorities, applicants to SCIRP funding opportunities should consider the following:

- Innovative research that investigates new directions or addresses neglected issues in the field of traumatic SCI is supported, although studies focused exclusively on identifying intervention targets are discouraged.
- Mechanism-focused studies must be specific to SCI and demonstrate a clear path from increased understanding to advancing treatments.
- Applications proposing interventions must demonstrate a clinically feasible window for treatment and more than incremental improvement over existing therapies.
- Studies addressing critical questions essential for advancing research toward clinical use, such as study population selection, dosing and safety are allowable.
- Applications from investigators within the DOW and applications involving multidisciplinary collaborations among academia, industry, the DOW, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and other federal government agencies are highly encouraged. These relationships can leverage knowledge, infrastructure and access to unique clinical populations that the collaborators bring to the research effort, ultimately advancing research that is significant to Service Members, Veterans, their Families and the American Public.

3.1. Program Priority Areas With Programmatic Goals

For FY26, the SCIRP identified near-term and long-term programmatic goals for program-supported research outcomes and products, which align to four key priority areas within the SCI field. ***Research supported by the FY26 SCIRP must address at least one of the program priority areas and undertake an associated near-team programmatic goal listed below.***

Additionally, applicants will be asked to describe the steps the research team will take to further advance the project's outcome(s)/product(s) in accordance with the long-term programmatic goal of the same priority area.

Priority Area: Acute Injury Intervention

- **Near-Term Goal:** Develop and/or test interventions, e.g., surgical, device, pharmacologic, that protect spinal cord tissue from further damage shortly after injury and can be administered on a timeline suitable for acute trauma care in both battlefield and civilian settings.
- **Long-Term Goal:** Adoption of management/stabilization practices into the standard of care for acute spinal cord injury, leading to meaningfully improved outcomes within the prehospital, hospital or deployed environments.

Priority Area: Secondary Health Effects

- **Near-Term Goal:** Develop and/or test interventions to prevent or manage the secondary health effects of spinal cord injury that impact injury survivors throughout their lifespan.
- **Long-Term Goal:** Adoption of interventions into the standard of care that significantly reduce the burden of secondary health effects and improve the lifelong health of SCI survivors.

Priority Area: Psychosocial Well-Being

- **Near-Term Goal:** Develop and/or test psychosocial interventions that are specifically tailored to the unique needs of individuals with SCI, their families and/or care partners.
- **Long-Term Goal:** Adoption of interventions into the standard of care that promote psychosocial well-being for people with SCI, their families and/or care partners.

Priority Area: Rehabilitation and Regeneration

- **Near-Term Goal:** Develop and/or test rehabilitation, regenerative, or neuroplastic interventions for individuals with spinal cord injury that can be implemented at any stage of life post-injury.
- **Long-Term Goal:** Adoption of validated rehabilitation and regenerative therapies into the standard of care that meaningfully improve function, independence, and quality of life after SCI.

3.2. Award History

The SCIRP Translational Research Award mechanism was first offered in FY12. Since then, 291 TRA applications were received, and 66 were recommended for funding.

3.3. Intent of the Translational Research Award

The SCIRP TRA is intended to support translational research that will accelerate the movement of promising ideas into clinical applications for the SCI community. This funding opportunity supports a range of studies, including preclinical evaluation of interventions and clinical studies involving human subjects, tissues or data. The TRA also supports projects that optimize future trial designs, ancillary studies for existing clinical trials and research that leverages clinical observations to refine preclinical evaluation.

The overarching goal of this funding mechanism is to bridge the gap between discovery and clinical application by supporting well-developed research with a clear and direct pathway to advancing meaningful improvements in care and quality of life for people living with SCI, their families or care partners.

3.3.1. Key Elements for the TRA

- **Impact:** Applications must articulate how the proposed research will advance at least one of the FY26 SCIRP priority areas and help achieve its associated near-term programmatic goal identified in Section 3.1
- **Translational Potential:** Applications need to clearly articulate three points along the translational research spectrum:
    - Where the field is now
    - Where the field will be after the successful completion of the proposed research project
    - What the next step will be after completion of the proposed project
- **Early-Career Partnership Option:** To promote enhanced research capacity within the SCI field, the FY26 TRA includes an option specifically for partnership with or among early-career investigators. The Partnership Option is structured to accommodate two PIs who will work together on a single research project. One PI will be identified as the Initiating PI and will be responsible for the majority of the administrative tasks associated with application submission. The other PI will be identified as a Partnering PI. At least one of the PIs (Initiating or Partnering) must be an early-career investigator. Both PIs should contribute significantly to the development and execution of the proposed research project. If recommended for funding, each PI will be named on a separate award to the recipient organization(s). Each award will be subject to separate reporting, regulatory, and administrative requirements. For individual submission requirements for the Initiating and Partnering PIs, refer to Section 5.3, Submission Instructions.
- **Community-Informed Research:** Research funded by the FY26 SCIRP TRA must be responsive to the needs of people with SCI, their families, and/or their care partners. To this end, applicants are encouraged to leverage patient perspectives research to inform the proposed research question or study design.

  Furthermore, research teams are also required to establish and utilize effective and equitable partnerships with SCI lived-experience community members to maximize the translation and impact potential of the proposed research. ***Applications to the FY26 SCIRP TRA are expected to name at least one community partner (e.g., SCI Lived-Experience Consultant, representative of community-based organizations) who will provide advice and consultation throughout the planning and implementation of the research project.*** For additional resources, see Community Collaboration below.

3.3.2. Other Important Considerations for the TRA

Allowable Research: Applications to the FY26 SCIRP TRA may include clinical or preclinical research. ***Proposal of animal studies is not a required element of this mechanism, though applications including animal studies must include a clear justification for the animal model chosen, including relevance to human SCI.***

In accordance with the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2026, Section 732, CDMRP does not support the conduct of painful research (U.S. Department of Agriculture pain

category D or E) involving domestic cats or dogs, except for studies relating to military or service animals.

The FY26 SCIRP TRA also allows funding for a pilot clinical trial as PART of the funded research project where limited clinical testing of a novel intervention or device is necessary to inform the next step in the continuum of translational research. Such pilot clinical trial studies should be small, make up only a portion of the proposed Statement of Work (SOW), and be utilized to establish feasibility of a potential approach or to aid in device or intervention refinement. Applications that include a pilot clinical trial as part of the proposed research will have additional submission requirements and review criteria.

Applications that consist entirely of a clinical trial or multiple trials, or foundational research, should consider other FY26 SCIRP funding opportunities that may be more appropriate for such research.

If the proposed research relies on access to unique resources or databases, the application must describe the access at the time of submission and include a plan for maintaining access as needed throughout the proposed research.

All projects should adhere to a core set of standards for rigorous study design and reporting to maximize the reproducibility and translational potential of clinical and preclinical research, such as those described in the STROBE, CONSORT, SPIRIT and ARRIVE 2.0 guidelines.

Use of Common Data Elements (CDEs): Use of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke SCI CDEs is strongly encouraged for all human subjects research.

Relevance to Military Health: To help elucidate the realities of treating and managing SCIs while in a deployed environment, a resource document is now available that outlines Spinal Cord Injury Management within the Military Health System (MHS). Applicants are encouraged to read and consider this document before preparing applications. Furthermore, applicants are encouraged to integrate and/or align their research projects with DOW and/or VA research laboratories and programs. Collaboration with the DOW and/or VA is also encouraged. A list of websites that may be useful in identifying additional information about ongoing DOW and VA areas of research interest or potential opportunities for collaboration can be found in Appendix 10 of the GAI.

Community Collaboration: Collaborative research approaches, such as community-based participatory research, participatory action research, and integrated knowledge transition, create partnerships between scientific researchers and community members to create knowledge useable by both sets of stakeholders. Recognizing the strengths of each partner, scientific researchers and community members ***collaborate and contribute equitably*** in all aspects of the project, which may include needs assessment, planning, research intervention design, implementation, evaluation and dissemination. ***Collaborative research approaches feature shared responsibility and ownership for the research project to ensure non-tokenistic involvement of community members within the research team.*** Research results are jointly interpreted, disseminated, fed back to affected communities, and may be translated into interventions or policy. These methods are critically important for community-level interventions and can also have important impacts on translational research and prototype development to identify and augment the potential impact of a research program on people living with SCI, their families and/or their care partners.

Collaborative relationships with consumers and the lived-experience community are often established through integrating community members into research teams as co-researchers, advisors and/or consultants. Some examples for implementing collaborative research approaches include:

- **Lived-Experience Consultation:** The research team includes at least one project advisor with lived SCI experience who will provide advice and consultation throughout the planning and implementation of the research project. Lived-Experience Consultants may include individuals with SCI, their family members and/or their care partners.
- **Partnership With a Community-Based Organization:** The research team establishes partnerships with at least one community-based organization that provides advice and consultation throughout the planning and implementation of the research project. Community-based organizations may include advocacy groups, service providers, policymakers or other formal organizational stakeholders.
- **Community Advisory Board Utilization:** A community advisory board is composed of multiple community stakeholders and can take many forms, from a board of Lived-Experience Consultants to a coalition of community-based organizations or any combination thereof. As with Lived-Experience Consultants and organizational partners, the community advisory board provides advice and consultation throughout planning and implementation of the research project.

Additional information on collaborative research approaches can be found here:

- Wallerstein, N. and B. Duran. 2010. Community-based participatory research contributions to intervention research: The intersection of science and practice to improve health equity. *American Journal of Public Health* 100(S1):S40-S46. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2009.184036.
- Gainforth, H.L., F. Hoekstra, R. McKay, et al. 2021. Integrated knowledge translation guiding principles for conducting and disseminating spinal cord injury research in partnership. *Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation* 102(4):656-663. doi: 10.1016/j.apmr.2020.09.393.

3.4. Funding Instrument

The funding instrument for awards made under the program announcement will be grants (31 USC 6304).

3.5. Funding Details

Period of Performance: The maximum period of performance is **3** years.

3.5.1. Application Submissions With a Single PI

Cost Cap: The application's total costs budgeted for the entire period of performance should not exceed **$2.0M**.

3.5.2. Application Submissions With the Early-Career Partnership Option:

Cost Cap: The combined total costs budgeted for the entire period of performance in the applications of the Initiating PI and the Partnering PI should not exceed **$2.16M**.

A separate award will be made to each PI's organization.

The PIs are expected to be partners in the research, and direct cost funding should be divided accordingly unless otherwise warranted and clearly justified.

Any application that requests the higher level of funding and that does not include an eligible early-career PI will have its budget reduced as appropriate.

3.5.3. For Both Options Within This Award Mechanism

If indirect cost rates have been negotiated, indirect costs are to be budgeted in accordance with the organization's negotiated rate. Collaborating organizations should budget associated indirect costs in accordance with each organization's negotiated rate.

All direct and indirect costs of any subaward or contract must be included in the direct costs of the primary award.

The applicant may request the entire maximum funding amount for a project that may have a period of performance less than the maximum **3** years.

The appropriateness of the budget for the proposed research will be assessed during peer review.

Direct Cost Restrictions: For this award mechanism, direct costs:

May be requested for (not all-inclusive):

- Data and research resource sharing costs.
- Costs associated with collaborative research approach (e.g., consultant costs, equitable participation training, capacity-building activities).
- Research subject compensation and reimbursement for trial-related out-of-pocket costs (e.g., travel, lodging, parking, costs associated with caregiving and resources/equipment to enable participation).
- Travel in support of multi-institutional collaborations.
- Costs for one investigator, per award, to travel to one scientific/technical meeting per year. The intent of travel to scientific/technical meetings should be to present project information or disseminate project results from the FY26 SCIRP TRA.

Must not be requested for:

- Costs for travel to scientific/technical meeting(s) beyond the limits stated above.

4. Application Contents and Format

4.1. Application Overview

Application submission is a two-step process requiring both a ***pre-application*** submitted via the Electronic Biomedical Research Application Portal (eBRAP) and a ***full application*** submitted through eBRAP or Grants.gov. Depending on the submission portal, certain aspects of the application will differ.

Intramural DOW organizations submitting a full application should follow instructions for submission through eBRAP.

Extramural organizations submitting a full application must follow instructions for submission through Grants.gov.

4.2. Pre-Application Components

The PI, or Initiating PI if selecting the **Early-Career Partnership Option**, must submit the following pre-application components.

Upload documents as individual PDF files unless otherwise noted. Files must comply with the formatting guidelines listed in the GAI.

- **Preproposal Narrative (two-page limit):** The Preproposal Narrative page limit applies to text and non-text elements (e.g., figures, tables, graphs, photographs, diagrams, chemical structures, drawings) used to describe the project. Inclusion of URLs that provide additional information to expand the Preproposal Narrative and could confer an unfair competitive advantage is prohibited and may result in administrative withdrawal of the pre-application.

  The Preproposal Narrative should include the following:

  - **Background/Rationale:** State the scientific rationale on which the proposed research project is based. Clearly demonstrate that there is sufficient rationale, background data and readiness to support the study. ***Indicate how the research question or study design is informed by the lived-experience community and/or patient perspectives research.***
  - **Specific Aims and Study Design:** Concisely state the project's specific aims and describe the scientific approach to address them. Include the animal model proposed, if applicable, along with its relevance to human SCI. If applicable, clearly identify which aims describe the proposed preclinical or clinical studies and which describe the pilot clinical trial. Describe how the outcome of the pilot clinical trial will optimize the design of future clinical trials or inform the next step in the continuum of translational research.

    Translation Potential: Explain how the project will accelerate promising laboratory research findings into clinical applications. Where applicable, describe how the proposed research will allow for a reciprocal flow of ideas between basic and clinical science.

    In addition to any specific regulatory milestones (e.g., submission of an application for an Investigational New Drug/Investigational Device Exemption [IND/IDE]), clearly articulate the following three points along the translational research spectrum:

    - Where the field is now

  - Where the field will be after the successful completion of the proposed research project
  - What the next step will be after completion of the proposed project
- **Impact:** Describe the potential impact of the proposed research on at least one of the FY26 priority areas. Indicate how the proposed research will help to achieve a near-term programmatic goal identified in Section 3.1.
- **Relevance to Military Health:** Describe whether/how the proposed research project is applicable to spinal cord-injured military Service Members, Veterans, and/or their Family members and care partners. Applicants are encouraged to review the Relevance to Military Health section of this program announcement prior to preparing this section.

- **Pre-Application Supporting Documentation:** The items to be included as supporting documentation for the pre-application ***must be uploaded as individual files*** and are limited to the following:
  - **References Cited (one-page limit):** List the references cited (including URLs if available) in the Preproposal Narrative using a standard reference format that includes the full citation (i.e., author[s], year published, reference title, and reference source, including volume, chapter, page numbers, and publisher, as appropriate).
  - **List of Abbreviations, Acronyms and Symbols:** Provide a list of abbreviations, acronyms, and symbols used in the Preproposal Narrative.

4.3. Full Application Components

Applicants must receive an invitation to submit a full application. Uninvited full application submissions will be rejected.

Early-Career Partnership Option: The CDMRP requires separate full application package submissions for the Initiating PI and Partnering PI, even if the PIs are located within the same organization. The application submission process for the Partnering PI uses an abbreviated full application package**.**

4.3.1. Full Application Components for the PI or Initiating PI

Each application submission must include the completed full application package for this program announcement. See Appendix 1 for a checklist of the full application components.

(a) SF424 Research & Related Application for Federal Assistance Form *(Grants.gov submissions only)*:

IMPORTANT: *When completing the SF424 R&R, enter the* ***eBRAP log number*** *assigned during pre-application submission into* ***Block 4a – Federal Identifier****.*

(b) Attachments:

Each attachment of the full application components must be uploaded as an individual file in the format specified and in accordance with the formatting guidelines in the GAI.

- **Attachment 1: Project Narrative (12-page limit): Upload as "ProjectNarrative.pdf".**

  Describe the proposed project in detail using ***one*** of the two outlines below, depending on whether or not a pilot clinical trial is included in the proposed research.

***Outline for projects without a pilot clinical trial*:**

- **Background:** Present the ideas and scientific reasoning behind the proposed research project. Provide a review and analysis of relevant literature and completed/ongoing studies, including preliminary studies, preclinical data and community/patient perspectives research as appropriate. If applicable, discuss how the proposed project builds off previous research efforts. This section should establish the relevance of the study and explain the applicability of the proposed findings to the SCI community and at least one of the FY26 SCIRP Program Priorities and associated near-term goal.
- **Objectives/Specific Aims/Hypotheses:** Describe the purpose of the proposed study with detailed objectives. State the hypothesis/research question to be tested and detail the specific aims that will address the hypothesis/research question. Only describe aims that the SCIRP award would fund.
- **Study Design and Feasibility:** Describe the research strategy, methods, and analyses, including controls, in sufficient detail for evaluation of their appropriateness and feasibility. Describe how the study is designed to achieve the project aims. Consult appropriate guidelines to ensure relevant aspects of rigorous and reproducible research are adequately planned for and, ultimately, reported. Address potential problem areas, and present alternative methods and approaches where appropriate. Indicate whether and how the study design is informed by the lived-experience community and/or patient perspectives research.

  As appropriate, describe the statistical model and data analysis plan with respect to the study objectives. If applicable, include power analysis calculations. Further information describing the strategy for how sex will be considered as a biological variable will be requested in Attachment 2.

  If applicable, briefly describe the use of animal model(s) within the study. Include a rationale for the choice of animal model and the model's relevance to human SCI. Full details will be required in the Animal Research Plan (Attachment 10).

  If human subjects or human anatomical samples or data will be used, include a detailed plan for the recruitment of subjects or the acquisition of samples or data, including evidence that the research team has access to subjects, samples and/or data. Describe the strategy for the inclusion of women and minorities appropriate to the objectives of the study, including a description of the composition of the proposed study population in terms of sex, racial, and ethnic group, and an accompanying rationale for the selection of subjects. Anticipated enrollment table(s) with the proposed enrollment distributed on the basis of sex, race and ethnicity should be provided as part of the application's Supporting Documentation (Attachment 2).

  If applicable, describe the SCI CDEs to be collected.
- **Study Personnel Description:** Briefly describe the composition of the study team along with any external consultants or advisors who will provide critical guidance and input to the study team (e.g., statistician, regulatory expert, commercialization consultant, clinical ethicist, patient advocate). Describe relevant background and qualifications that demonstrate appropriate expertise to accomplish the proposed work, including previous interactions with the relevant Regulatory Agency, if applicable. ***Highlight how the study team composition provides military-relevant subject matter expertise to the proposed research, if applicable.***

Outline for projects with a pilot clinical trial:

- **Background:** Present the ideas and scientific reasoning behind the proposed research project. Provide a review and analysis of relevant literature and completed/ ongoing studies, including preliminary studies, preclinical data and community/ patient perspectives research as appropriate. If applicable, discuss how the proposed project builds off previous research efforts. This section should establish the relevance of the study and explain the applicability of the proposed findings to the SCI community and at least one of the FY26 SCIRP Program Priorities and associated near-term goal.
- **Objectives/Specific Aims/Hypotheses:** Describe the purpose of the proposed study with detailed objectives. State the hypothesis/research question to be tested and detail the specific aims that will address the hypothesis/research question. Only describe aims that the SCIRP award would fund.
- **Study Design and Feasibility:** Describe the research strategy, methods and analyses, including controls, in sufficient detail for evaluation of their appropriateness and feasibility. Describe how the study is designed to achieve the project aims. Consult appropriate guidelines to ensure relevant aspects of rigorous and reproducible research are adequately planned for and, ultimately, reported. Address potential problem areas, and present alternative methods and approaches where appropriate. Indicate whether and how the study design is informed by the lived-experience community and/or patient perspectives research.

  As appropriate, describe the statistical model and data analysis plan with respect to the study objectives. If applicable, include power analysis calculations. Further information describing the strategy for how sex will be considered as a biological variable will be requested in Attachment 2.

  If applicable, briefly describe the use of animal model(s) within the study. Include a rationale for the choice of animal model and the model's relevance to human SCI. Full details will be required in the Animal Research Plan (Attachment 10).

  If human subjects or human anatomical samples or data will be used, include a detailed plan for the recruitment of subjects or the acquisition of samples or data, including evidence that the research team has access to subjects, samples and/or data. Describe the strategy for the inclusion of women and minorities appropriate to the objectives of the study, including a description of the composition of the proposed study population in terms of sex, racial, and ethnic group, and an accompanying rationale for the selection of subjects. Anticipated enrollment table(s) with the proposed enrollment distributed on the basis of sex, race and ethnicity should be provided as part of the application's Supporting Documentation (Attachment 2).

  If applicable, describe the SCI CDEs to be collected.
- **Pilot Clinical Trial:** Provide plans for initiating and conducting the pilot clinical trial during the course of this award. Further details of the pilot clinical trial will be required in Attachment 12.

  Briefly identify the intervention. Describe the type of clinical trial to be performed and outline the proposed methodology. Alternative trial designs to traditional randomized clinical trials are supported by this funding mechanism. Explain how the study design is appropriate to the objective of the trial. Describe potential challenges and alternative strategies where appropriate.

Describe how the pilot clinical trial is clearly linked to the preclinical or clinical research studies that will also be performed through this award.

Include a description of how the proposed work is responsive to the intent of the FY26 SCIRP TRA and includes only exploratory clinical testing of a novel intervention or device necessary to inform the next step in the continuum of translational research. Describe how the pilot clinical study is small, represents only a portion of the proposed SOW (Attachment 5), and will be utilized to establish feasibility of a potential approach or to aid in device, intervention or future clinical trial design refinement.

Study Personnel Description: Briefly describe the composition of the study team along with any external consultants or advisors who will provide critical guidance and input to the study team (e.g., statistician, regulatory expert, commercialization consultant, clinical ethicist, patient advocate). Describe relevant background and qualifications that demonstrate appropriate expertise to accomplish the proposed work, including previous interactions with the relevant Regulatory Agency, if applicable. ***Highlight how the study team composition provides military-relevant subject matter expertise to the proposed research, if applicable***

- **Attachment 2: Supporting Documentation: Combine and upload as a single file named "Support.pdf".**

There are no page limits for these components unless otherwise noted. Include only components described below; inclusion of items not requested or viewed as an extension of the Project Narrative will result in the removal of those items or may result in administrative withdrawal of the application.

References Cited: List the references cited in the Project Narrative using a standard reference format (include URLs, if available).

List of Abbreviations, Acronyms and Symbols: Provide a list of abbreviations, acronyms and symbols.

Facilities, Existing Equipment and Other Resources: Describe the facilities and equipment available for performance of the proposed project; include any additional facilities or equipment proposed for acquisition at no cost to the award. Indicate whether government-furnished facilities or equipment are proposed for use. If so, reference the original or present government award under which the facilities or equipment items are now accountable. There is not a standardized form for this information.

Publications and/or Patents: Include a list of relevant publication URLs and/or patent abstracts. If articles are not publicly available, then copies of up to five published manuscripts may be included in Attachment 2. Extra items will not be reviewed.

Regulatory Documentation *(if applicable)*: For the purposes of this funding opportunity, Regulatory Agency refers to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or any relevant international regulatory agency unless otherwise noted.

- ***For products/interventions that do not require regulation by a Regulatory Agency:***

  Provide evidence that the clinical trial does not require regulation by a Regulatory Agency. No further information for this attachment is required.

- ***For products that require regulation by a Regulatory Agency:***

  If the product is not currently FDA-approved, -licensed, or -cleared and requires an IND/IDE or equivalent, provide documentation that supports the feasibility of acquiring an active IND or IDE (and/or international equivalent) for the product as appropriate for the objectives of the study. If available, provide a copy of the communication from the FDA indicating the IND or IDE application is active/safe to proceed.

Letters of Support (two-page limit per letter is recommended): Provide individual letters signed by collaborating individuals and/or organizational officials demonstrating that the PI has the support and resources necessary for the proposed work. Letters from the PI's Department Chair, or appropriate organization official, should also confirm that the PI(s) meet eligibility criteria. If applicable, provide a letter of support, signed by the lowest-ranking person with approval authority, confirming participation of intramural DOW collaborator(s) and/or access to military populations, databases or DOW resources. If applicable, provide a letter of support signed by the VA Facility Director(s), or an individual designated by the VA Facility Director(s), confirming access to VA patients, resources and/or VA research space.

Sex as a Biological Variable Strategy (two-page limit is recommended): Describe the strategy for how sex will be considered as a biological variable. This strategy should include a brief discussion of what is currently known regarding sex differences in the applicable research area. Clearly articulate how sex as a biological variable will be factored into the data analysis plan and how data will be collected and disaggregated by sex. If needed, provide a strong rationale for proposing a single-sex study, based on justification from scientific literature, preliminary data or other relevant considerations. Refer to the CDMRP Directive on Sex as a Biological Variable in Research for additional information.

Research Sharing Plan: Describe the type of data or research resources (e.g., bio-specimen, analysis tool/software, training material) to be made publicly available as a result of the proposed work. Describe the mechanism (e.g., direct sharing, repository, mixed mode) by which data and resources generated during the period of performance will be shared with the research community and other affected communities, including clinical research participants. Include the name of the repository(ies) where scientific data and resources arising from the proposed study will be archived, if applicable. Identify and provide the rationale for any data or resources that will not be shared (e.g. for intellectual property, feasibility, cost, or other considerations). The plan should also protect participant privacy, confidential and proprietary data, and performer/third-party intellectual property. Provide a milestone plan for disseminating data/results including when data and resources will be made available to other users. In cases where the study participant could potentially derive medical or other benefit from the information, explain whether the results of screening and/or study participation will be shared with the participant or their primary care provider, including results from any screening or diagnostic tests performed as part of the study.

Do not submit a copy of the National Institutes of Health Data Management and Sharing Plan or duplicate the Data Management Plan, which will be requested only after a recommendation for funding is made.

Refer to the CDMRP Directive on Sharing Data and Research Resources for more information about the CDMRP's expectations for making data and research resources publicly available.

Inclusion Enrollment Plan *(required if clinical research or trial is proposed)*: Provide an anticipated enrollment table(s) for the inclusion of women and minorities using the Public Health Service (PHS) Inclusion Enrollment Report, a three-page fillable PDF form that can be downloaded from eBRAP. The enrollment table(s) should be appropriate to the objectives of the study with the proposed enrollment distributed on the basis of sex, race and ethnicity.

- **Attachment 3: Technical Abstract (one-page limit): Upload as "TechAbs.pdf".**

Write the technical abstract using the outline below. Clarity and completeness within the space limits are highly important.

Background: Present the scientific rationale behind the proposed research project.

Hypothesis/Objective(s): State the hypothesis to be tested and/or objective(s) to be reached.

Specific Aims: State the specific aims of the study.

Study Design: Briefly describe the study design, including appropriate controls.

Impact: Briefly describe the impact of this study on one or more FY26 SCIRP priority areas. Indicate how the proposed research will help to achieve a near-term programmatic goal identified in Section 3.1.

Military Relevance: Describe how the study is relevant to military health.

- **Attachment 4: Lay Abstract (one-page limit): Upload as "LayAbs.pdf".**

The lay abstract should address the points outlined below ***in a manner that is readily understood by readers without a background in science or medicine.*** Avoid overuse of scientific jargon, acronyms and abbreviations. ***Do not duplicate the technical abstract.***

Summarize the objectives and rationale for the proposed research.

Describe the intervention(s), if applicable.

What population will the research help, and how will it help them?

What are the potential applications, benefits, and risks of the anticipated outcomes?

How will the proposed research advance meaningful improvements in care, and quality of life for people living with SCI, their families or care partners?

What is the projected time it may take to achieve a person-related outcome?

Describe how the proposed study will directly address an FY26 SCIRP priority area and contribute to the associated near-term programmatic goal identified in Section 3.1.

- What is the potential benefit of the proposed study and the anticipated outcome to Service Members, Veterans and/or their Families?

- **Attachment 5: Statement of Work (three-page limit): Upload as "SOW.pdf".** Refer to eBRAP for the Suggested SOW Format.

  For guidance on preparing the SOW, refer to either the "Example: Assembling a Clinical Research and/or Clinical Trial Statement of Work" or "Example: Assembling a Generic Statement of Work", whichever is most appropriate for the proposed effort. Include milestones for data or research resource(s) sharing.

  Include the name(s) of the key personnel and contact information for each study site/ subaward site. The contributions of the key personnel, including the PI or Initiating PI, Partnering PI (if applicable), and SCI Lived-Experience Consultants or community partners, should be noted for each task.

  Early-Career Partnership Option: Each PI must submit an identical copy of a jointly created SOW.

- **Attachment 6: Impact Statement (one-page limit): Upload as "Impact.pdf".**

  The impact statement summarizes the potential short- and long-term impact of the proposed research for the SCI lived-experience community and for the broader SCI research field. The statement should address the points outlined below written ***in a manner that will be readily understood by readers without a background in science or medicine.***

  Detail the anticipated research outcome(s) that will be directly attributed to the results of the proposed study and describe the anticipated benefits of these outcomes for individuals with SCI and the broader SCI research field. Explain how the proposed project will advance at least one of the FY26 SCIRP priority areas and help achieve its associated near-term programmatic goal, as identified in Section 3.1.

  To demonstrate how the study is grounded in the needs of the SCI community, describe how the lived-experience community and/or patient perspectives research informed the research question or study design.

  Assess the likelihood that a successful outcome of the proposed research project will lead to practical application in individuals living with SCI. If applicable, state whether/ how the proposed project builds off previous research efforts to advance a product, outcome or finding closer to clinical utility.

  If applicable, describe how the anticipated outcomes of the proposed study will make an impact in understanding health differences between sexes.

  Describe whether/how the proposed research project is applicable to the unique health care needs and quality of life concerns of spinal cord-injured military Service Members, Veterans, and/or their Family members and care partners. Applicants are encouraged to review the Relevance to Military Health section of this program announcement prior to preparing this section.

- **Attachment 7: Community Collaboration Plan: Upload as "Collaboration.pdf".**

  Community Collaboration Statement (three-page limit is recommended): For the FY26 SCIRP TRA, research teams are required to establish and utilize effective and equitable collaborations and partnerships with the SCI lived-experience community to maximize the translational and impact potential of proposed research. More detailed description and expectations of these collaborations/partnerships is included in Section 3.3.2.

Include the name of at least one community partner (e.g., SCI Lived-Experience Consultant, representative of community-based organization) who will provide advice and consultation throughout the planning and implementation of the research project. The individual's role in the project should be independent of their employment.

Describe the collaborative research approach that will be used (e.g., Lived-Experience Consultation, partnership with community-based organization, community advisory board, co-researcher model) including a justification for the approach as well as when the approach will be used within the research project.

Detail the community partner's contributions to the research process thus far, as well as the framework for capturing future input. Explain how this input will be meaningfully integrated to inform each phase of the research lifecycle, including needs assessment, planning, design, execution, analysis and dissemination.

Detail the resource allocation and decision-making processes to be employed.

Describe any training that will be provided to both scientific researchers and community members on collaborative research approaches, decision-making and equitable participation.

Describe co-learning and capacity-building activities among all partners.

Outline the process measures to assess the effectiveness of the chosen collaborative research approach.

Letters of Community Collaboration (two-page limit per letter is recommended): Provide a letter signed by each community partner (e.g., SCI Lived-Experience Consultant, representative of community-based organizations) confirming their role and commitment to participation on the research team. If a community-based organization will be engaged, the letter of commitment should be signed by BOTH the organization point of contact leading the engagement and the organization's leadership endorsing the collaboration, if different from the point of contact. The letter should include the qualifications and background of the individual and describe the relevance of those qualifications to the individual's role within the team and to the proposed research project.

- **Attachment 8: Translation Statement (one-page limit): Upload as "Translation.pdf".**

The purpose of this statement is to justify why the proposed project is translational and define its position on the research spectrum.

State explicitly how the proposed research project is translational and describe how it will help to accelerate the movement of promising ideas into clinical applications for the SCI community. Clearly articulate three points along the translational research spectrum:

Where the field is now, including the current state of knowledge or practice

Where the field will be after the successful completion of the proposed research project

The most critical next step to take after completion of the proposed project to move the outcome forward

If the proposed research includes a pilot clinical trial, explain why it is necessary to advance the research outcomes toward clinical implementation.

- **Attachment 9: Long-Term Goal (three-page limit): Upload as "Longterm.pdf".**

  The purpose of this attachment is to create a high-level roadmap detailing the steps needed to eventually translate outcomes of SCIRP-funded research into the standard of care, consistent with the long-term programmatic goals of the FY26 SCIRP. The long-term goal attachment should include the points listed below.

  Near-Term Action: Outline the immediate next steps to be taken by the research team after successful completion of the proposed research project, including plans for dissemination of results, further outcome validation if applicable and engagement with end-users (e.g., patients, clinicians).

  Intermediate Objectives: Discuss the unresolved questions that must be answered for the outcome to be adopted within the standard of care, considering the following as a starting place:

  - What additional research is necessary?
  - What is the likely regulatory pathway?
  - What is the commercial potential of the outcome?
  - What is the intellectual property strategy? If the intellectual property rights are not owned by the study team, how will the final product become accessible to the SCI community?

  Long-Term Strategy: Describe the long-term implementation and adoption strategy for the research outcome, outlining key milestones on the path to adoption.

  Identify the key collaborations (e.g., clinical partners, commercial entities, patient groups, professional societies) required to execute the strategy. Be specific about the types of partners needed, and name them if possible.

  Concisely explain how successfully executing this strategy will lead to the integration of the research outcome into the standard of care and directly fulfill the specific long-term programmatic goal for the relevant FY26 SCIRP priority area.

- **Attachment 10: Animal Research Plan (three-page limit): Upload as "AnimalResPlan.pdf".** ***(Applications proposing animal studies only.)*** The purpose of this attachment is to provide additional details regarding the proposed animal research beyond what was included within the project narrative.

  Consult the ARRIVE guidelines 2.0 (Animal Research: Reporting *In Vivo* Experiments) to ensure relevant aspects of rigorous animal research are adequately planned for. The Animal Research Plan may not be an exact replica of the protocol(s) submitted to the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). The Animal Research Plan should address the following points to achieve reproducible and rigorous results for each proposed animal study:

  Describe the research objective(s) of the animal study. Explain how and why the animal species, strain, and model(s) being used can address the scientific objectives and, where appropriate, the study's relevance to human biology. ***Be specific as to why an animal model is necessary to address the study aims, why the specific animal SCI model was chosen over other models, including any relevance of the model specific to military health, and how it is optimal for addressing the study aims. The model's relevance to human SCI should also be detailed.***

Summarize the procedures to be conducted and the outcome measures to be collected. Describe how the study will be controlled.

Describe the randomization and blinding procedures for the study, and any other measures to be taken to minimize the effects of subjective bias during animal treatment and assessment of results. If randomization and/or blinding will not be utilized, provide justification.

Provide a sample size estimate for each study arm and the method by which it was derived, including power analysis calculations.

Describe how data will be handled, including rules for stopping data collection, criteria for inclusion and exclusion of data, how outliers will be defined and handled, statistical methods for data analysis, and identification of the primary endpoint(s).

- **Attachment 11: Partnership Statement (one-page limit): Upload as "Partnership.pdf".** ***(Early-Career Partnership Option only.)***

Describe the experience of the Initiating and Partnering PI and indicate how the award will help to enhance research capacity within the SCI field. Describe the contribution and time commitment of each PI toward the proposed research project. Describe how the partners' combined experience will better address the research question and explain why the work should be done together rather than through separate efforts.

- **Attachment 12: Pilot Clinical Trial Plan (five-page limit): Upload as "ClinTrialPlan.pdf".** ***(Applications proposing a pilot clinical trial only.)***

The purpose of this attachment is to provide additional details regarding the proposed clinical trial beyond what was included within the project narrative.

Identify the intervention, technology or approach to be investigated. Demonstrate the availability of the intervention, technology, or approach, including IND/IDE status (or other Regulatory Agency approvals), as applicable. Regulatory documentation should be provided as part of Attachment 2. Indicate who holds the intellectual property rights to the intervention and how the PI has obtained access to those rights for conduct of the study, if applicable. Describe how the study addresses clinical needs and how it compares with what is currently available and/or standards of care.

Describe the type of study to be performed. Outline the proposed methodology and study variables in sufficient detail to demonstrate a clear course of action and justification. Describe the interaction with the human subject, the study intervention that they will experience and the dose and administration route of the intervention. Provide sufficient detail for a person uninvolved in the study to understand what the study participant will experience in chronological order. If applicable, describe the decentralized clinical trial strategies to be leveraged including virtual elements/tools for participant recruitment/enrollment, intervention administration/delivery, and/or outcome data acquisition.

Define all endpoints/outcome measures relevant to the objective of the study, explain why they were chosen, and describe how, when, and where they will be measured. Where applicable, describe the SCI CDEs to be collected. Include all evaluations that will be made for study purposes.

Identify the study population and describe the methods that will be used for the recruitment of subjects or the acquisition of samples or data, including evidence that the research team has access to subjects, samples and/or data. List the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the proposed clinical research or trial providing a

justification for exclusion of any demographic groups. Describe the strategy for recruitment and retention specific to women and minorities appropriate to the objectives of the study, including a description of the composition of the proposed study population in terms of sex, racial, and ethnic group, and an accompanying rationale for the selection of subjects. Anticipated enrollment table(s) with the proposed enrollment distributed on the basis of sex, race and ethnicity should be provided as part of Attachment 2.

As appropriate, describe the statistical model and data analysis plan with respect to the study objectives. If applicable, include power analysis calculations. Further information describing the strategy for how sex will be considered as a biological variable will be requested in Attachment 2.

If the proposed study involves more than one institution, clearly describe the multi-institutional structure governing the research protocol(s) across all participating institutions. If applicable, describe how communication and data transfer between/ among the collaborating institutions will occur, as well as how data, specimens and/or imaging products obtained during the study will be handled and shared. Provide a plan for resolving intellectual and material property issues among participating organizations.

- **Attachment 13: Representations *(Grants.gov submissions only)*: Upload as "RequiredReps.pdf".** All extramural applicants must complete and submit the Required Representations document available on eBRAP.

- **Attachment 14: Suggested Intragovernmental/Intramural Budget Form *(if applicable)*: Upload as "IGBudget.pdf".** If an intramural DOW organization will be a collaborator in the performance of the project, complete a separate budget for that organization using the Suggested Intragovernmental/Intramural Budget form available on eBRAP.

(c) Additional Application Materials:

The following are additional forms for application submission. Follow the instructions specific to the submission portal, as found within the GAI.


Grants.gov


eBRAP.org

i. Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)

- **Biographical Sketch**
- **Current/Pending Support**

  Intragovernmental applicants must include their internally supported research and development programs.

ii. Research & Related Budget

Initiating and Partnering PIs must have a separate budget and justification specific to their distinct portions of the effort that the applicant organization will submit as separate Grants.gov or eBRAP application packages. The Initiating PI should not include budget information for the Partnering PI even if they are located within the same organization. Refer to Section 3.5, Funding Details, for detailed budget information.

iii. Project/Performance Site Location(s)

iv. Research & Related Subaward Budget Attachment(s) *(if applicable, Grants.gov submissions only)*

4.3.2. Full Application Components for the Partnering PI

Refer to the equivalent attachment above for details specific to each of the following application components. See Appendix 1 for a checklist of the full application components required for the Partnering PI.

(a) SF424 Research & Related Application for Federal Assistance Form *(Grants.gov Submissions Only)*: 

(b) Attachments:

- **Attachment 5: Statement of Work (three-page limit): Upload as "SOW.pdf".** Each PI must submit an identical copy of a jointly created SOW.
- **Attachment 13: Representations *(Grants.gov submissions only)*: Upload as "RequiredReps.pdf".**
- **Attachment 14: Suggested Intragovernmental/Intramural Budget Form: Upload as "IGBudget.pdf".**

(c) Additional Application Materials:

The following are additional application materials for application submission. Follow the instructions specific to the submission portal found within the GAI.

Grants.gov	eBRAP.org

i. Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)

- **Biographical Sketch**
- **Current/Pending Support**

  Intragovernmental applicants must include their internally supported research and development programs.

ii. Research & Related Budget

Initiating and Partnering PIs must have a separate budget and justification specific to their distinct portions of the effort that the applicant organization will submit as separate Grants.gov or eBRAP application packages. The Partnering PI should not include budget information for the Initiating PI even if they are located within the same organization. Refer to Section 3.5, Funding Details, for detailed budget information.

iii. Project/Performance Site Location(s) Form

iv. Research & Related Subaward Budget Attachment(s) Form *(if applicable, Grants.gov submissions only)*

4.4. Other Application Elements

If recommended for funding, a data management plan compliant with Section 3.c, Enclosure 3, DoD Instructions 3200.12 will be requested.

The government reserves the right to request a revised budget, budget justification and/or additional information for applications recommended for funding.

5. Submission Requirements

5.1. Location of Application Package

Download the application package components for HT942526SCIRPTRA from Grants.gov or eBRAP, depending on which submission portal will be used.

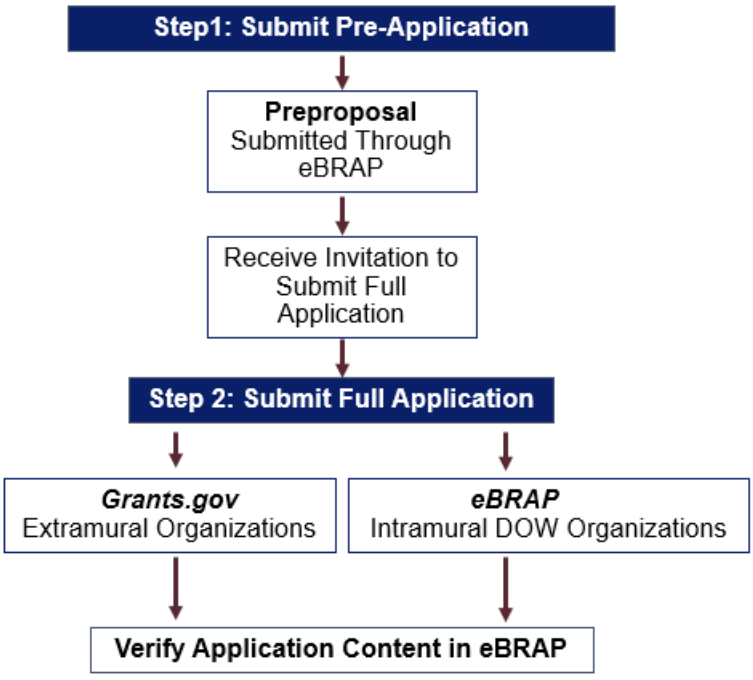
5.2. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management

The applicant organization must be registered as an entity in the System for Award Management (SAM), SAM.gov, and receive confirmation of an "Active" status before submitting an application through Grants.gov. Organizations must include the unique entity identifier (UEI) generated by the SAM in applications to this funding opportunity and maintain an active registration in the SAM at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application under consideration.

5.3. Submission Instructions

The CDMRP uses two portal systems to accept pre- and full application submissions. The workflow below shows which portal system to use for pre- and full application submissions, respectively.

Application Submission Workflow



5.3.1. Pre-Application Submission

All pre-application components must be submitted by the PI or Initiating PI through eBRAP, including the submission of contact information for the Partnering PI if selecting the Early-Career Partnership Option.

At least one community partner (e.g., SCI Lived-Experience Consultant, representative of a community-based organization) must be named as part of the pre-application submission. The community partners' roles in the project should be independent of their employment. For administrative purposes, select "Consumer" when assigning the community partners' roles in eBRAP.

During the pre-application process, eBRAP assigns each submission a unique log number. This unique log number is required during the full application submission process. The eBRAP log number, application title and all information for the PI, Business Official(s), performing organization, and contracting organization must be consistent throughout the entire pre-application and full application submission process. Inconsistencies may delay application processing and limit or negate the ability to view, modify and verify the application in eBRAP. Contact the eBRAP Help Desk if any changes need to be made.

Early-Career Partnership Option: After the Initiating PI confirms submission of the pre-application, the Partnering PI will be notified of the pre-application submission via an email from eBRAP. ***The Partnering PI must follow the instructions provided in the email to associate the partnering pre-application with their eBRAP account.*** If not previously registered, the Partnering PI must register in eBRAP.

Partnering PIs should not initiate a new pre-application based on the same research project submitted by the Initiating PI. Partnering PIs are urged to associate the partnering pre-application with their eBRAP account as soon as possible. If this is not completed by the full application deadline:

- Any intramural Partnering PI will not be able to submit their full application package components to eBRAP.
- The Partnering PI will not be able to view and modify their full application during the verification period in eBRAP.

When starting the pre-application, PIs should select a Mechanism Option appropriate to their pre-application:

Application Includes:	Select Mechanism Option:
Single PI and No Pilot Clinical Trial	No Option
Single PI and Pilot Clinical Trial	TRA – Pilot Clinical Trial
Early-Career PI and Other PI but No Pilot Clinical Trial	TRA With Early-Career Partnership Option
Early-Career PI and Other PI and Pilot Clinical Trial	TRA With Early-Career Partnership Option – Pilot Clinical Trial

5.3.2. Full Application Submission

Grants.gov Submissions: Full applications from extramural organizations *must* be submitted through the Grants.gov Workspace.

eBRAP Submissions: Only intramural DOW organizations may submit full applications through eBRAP.

5.3.3. Applicant Verification of Full Application Submission in eBRAP

Independent of the submission portal, once the full application is submitted, it is transmitted to and processed in eBRAP; the transmission to eBRAP may take up to 48 hours. At this stage, the PI and organizational representatives will receive an email from eBRAP instructing them to log in to eBRAP to review, modify and verify the full application submission. ***The Project Narrative and Research & Related Budget Form cannot be changed after the application submission deadline.*** Other application components, including subaward budget(s) and subaward budget justification(s), may be changed until the application verification period ends. The full application cannot be modified once the application verification period ends.

5.4. Submission Dates and Times

The pre-application and full application submission process should be started early to avoid missing deadlines. Regardless of submission portal used, all pre- and full application components must be submitted by the deadlines stipulated in this program announcement. There are no grace periods for deadlines; failure to meet submission deadlines will result in application rejection. ***The DHACA cannot make allowances/exceptions for submission problems encountered by the applicant.***

Submission dates and times are specified in Section 1, Basic Information.

5.5. Intergovernmental Review

Not applicable for this funding opportunity.

6. Application Review Information

6.1. Application Compliance Review

Submitting applications that propose essentially the same research project to different funding opportunities within the same program and fiscal year is prohibited and will result in administrative withdrawal of the duplicative application(s).

While it is allowable to propose similar research projects to different programs within the CDMRP or to other organizations, duplication of funding or accepting funding from more than one source for the same research is prohibited. See the CDMRP's Directive on Research Duplication.

Including classified research data within the application and/or proposing research that may produce classified outcomes or outcomes deemed sensitive to national security concerns, may result in application withdrawal.

Members of the FY26 SCIRP Programmatic Panel must not be involved in any pre-application or full application including, but not limited to, concept design, application development, budget preparation and the development of any supporting documentation, including personal letters of support/recommendation for the research and/or PI. Programmatic panel members ***may*** provide letters to confirm PI eligibility and access to laboratory space, equipment and other resources necessary for the project if that is part of their regular roles and responsibilities (e.g., as Department Chair). ***A list of the FY26 SCIRP Programmatic Panel members can be found on the CDMRP website.***

Additional restrictions and associated administrative responses are outlined in Section 9.2, Administrative Actions.

6.2. Review Criteria

6.2.1. Pre-Application Screening Criteria

To determine the merits of the pre-application and the relevance to the mission of the SCIRP, pre-applications will be screened based on the following criteria:

- **Funding Mechanism:** How well the study adheres to the intent of the funding mechanism.
- **Background/Rationale:** How well the background and scientific rationale demonstrate sufficient evidence to support the proposed research project. To what extent the research question or study design is informed by the lived-experience community and/or patient perspectives research.
- **Specific Aims and Study Design:** How well the specific aims are stated and addressed in the outlined research project. If applicable, how well the outcome of the pilot clinical trial will optimize the design of future clinical trials or inform the next step in the continuum of translational research.
- **Translational Potential:** How well the project will accelerate promising research findings into clinical applications and move the field forward from where it is now to where it will be at the completion of the research project. Whether the next steps after completion of the work are articulated and reasonable.

- **Impact:** How well the proposed research project addresses one or more FY26 SCIRP Priority Areas and will make important contributions toward achieving a near-term programmatic goal.
- **Relevance to Military Health:** To what extent the proposed research project will directly or indirectly benefit spinal cord-injured military Service Members, Veterans, and/or their Family members and care partners.

6.2.2. Peer Review Criteria

To determine technical merit, all applications will be evaluated individually according to the following **scored criteria**, listed in decreasing order of importance:

- **Translational Potential**
  - How well the application justifies how the proposed work is translational.
  - How well the application describes where the field is now, and whether the anticipated research outcome(s) are realistic given the state of the field and the proposed research approach.
  - To what extent the critical next step to take after completion of the proposed project is necessary and required to move the outcome of the research forward toward clinical implementation.
  - How likely the research will move promising ideas into clinical applications for the SCI community.
- **Study Design and Feasibility**
  - How well the scientific rationale for the proposed study is supported by the preliminary data, review and analysis of the literature and completed/ongoing studies.
  - How well the specific aims/hypotheses/research question, study design, experimental methods, data collection procedures, evaluations and data analysis plan are designed to address the objective and purpose of the study.
  - To what extent the proposed research project is feasible as described.
    - How well the application demonstrates availability of the intervention, access to the study population/data/samples and ability to achieve research goals.
    - If applicable, whether the application includes sufficient evidence to support successful recruitment of and access to human subjects, data, and samples and whether the strategy for the inclusion of women and minorities and distribution of proposed enrollment are appropriate for the proposed research.
  - How well the application acknowledges potential problems and addresses alternative approaches.
  - How well studies are designed to achieve reproducible and rigorous results, including the choice of model and endpoints/outcomes.
    - If applicable, how well the chosen animal model of SCI simulates the human condition and is justified is over other models.
  - Whether the strategy for considering sex as a biological variable is appropriate to the objectives of the study or whether the justification for a single-sex study is sufficiently strong.

- If applicable, whether the application describes SCI CDEs to be collected.

- **Clinical Strategy *(Pilot Clinical Trials Only)***
  - How well the proposed pilot clinical trial meets the requirements of the FY26 SCIRP TRA with regard to being small, representing only a portion of the proposed SOW, and being utilized to establish feasibility of a potential approach or aid in device, intervention or future clinical trial design refinement.
  - How clearly linked the proposed pilot clinical trial is to the preclinical or clinical research studies that will also be performed through this award.
  - To what extent the strategy for recruitment and retention of women and minorities in the clinical trial is appropriate to the objectives of the study.
  - If applicable, whether the justification for limiting inclusion of any demographic group is sufficiently strong.
  - If applicable, to what extent the clinical trial will leverage decentralized clinical trial strategies, including virtual elements/tools for participant recruitment/enrollment, intervention administration/delivery and/or outcome data acquisition.
- **Scientific Impact**
  - To what extent a successful outcome of the proposed research project will make important contributions toward advancing at least one of the FY26 SCIRP priority areas and help achieve its associated near-term programmatic goal, as identified in Section 3.1.
  - If applicable, to what extent the proposed project builds off of previous research efforts to advance a product, outcome or finding closer to clinical utility.
- **Patient Impact**
  - To what extent the proposed research addresses a critical need for the SCI community, specific to at least one FY26 SCIRP Priority Area.
  - How likely a successful outcome of the proposed research project will lead to a practical application in individuals living with SCI.
  - To what degree the lived-experience community, including community partners (e.g., SCI Lived-Experience Consultants, representatives of community-based organizations) and/or patient perspectives research informed the research question or study design.
  - How well the Community Collaboration Plan is designed to meaningfully integrate input from the community partners (e.g., SCI Lived-Experience Consultants, representatives of community-based organizations) into the needs assessment, planning, design, execution, analysis and/or dissemination of the research.
  - If applicable, to what extent the anticipated outcomes of the proposed study will make an impact in understanding health differences between sexes.
  - To what degree the proposed research project is applicable to the unique health care needs and quality of life concerns of injured military Service Members, Veterans, and/or their Family members and care partners.

- **Long-Term Goal**
  - To what extent the application provides a credible and comprehensive strategy to eventually translate outcomes of the research into the standard of care, consistent with the long-term programmatic goals of the FY26 SCIRP.
  - Whether immediate next steps to be taken by the research team upon successful completion of the proposed research project are articulated and appropriate.
  - To what degree the discussion of unresolved questions that must be answered for the research outcome to be adopted within the standard of care demonstrates a realistic understanding of the primary barriers to adoption.
  - How well the implementation and adoption strategy details a clear, logical and feasible roadmap with high potential to translate the research outcome into a product or clinical practice within the standard of care, and to what extent key collaborations are identified and appropriate to the plan.
- **Personnel**
  - To what degree the composition of the study team, including any external consultants or advisors (e.g., statistician, regulatory expert, commercialization consultant, clinical ethicist, patient advocate, military-relevant subject matter expert), is appropriate to accomplish the proposed work.
  - To what degree the levels of effort by the PI, Partnering PI (if applicable), and other key personnel are appropriate to ensure successful conduct of the proposed work.
  - To what degree the qualifications and background of the community partner (e.g., SCI Lived-Experience Consultant, representative of community-based organization) are relevant to their role within the team and to the proposed research project.
  - **Early-Career Partnership Option:** How the partners' combined expertise will better address the research question and to what extent the award will help to enhance research capacity within the SCI field.

In addition, the following criteria will also contribute to the overall evaluation of the application, but will not be individually scored and are therefore termed **unscored criteria**:

- **Regulatory Strategy**
  - If applicable, whether the application includes documentation that the study is exempt from Regulatory Agency review; or, if Regulatory Agency review is necessary, whether the documentation provided supports the feasibility of acquiring an active IND or IDE (and/or international equivalent) for the regulated product.
- **Research Sharing Plan**
  - To what extent the plan for sharing of project data and research resources is appropriate and reasonable and includes dissemination to affected communities, study participants and/or the scientific community. If applicable, which specific repository(ies) were designated for storing project data and research resources?
- **Budget**
  - Whether the budget is appropriate for the proposed research.

- **Environment**
  - To what degree the scientific environment, clinical setting, and the accessibility of institutional resources support the clinical trial at each participating center or institution (including collaborative arrangements).
  - Whether there is evidence for appropriate institutional commitment from each participating institution.
- **Application Presentation**
  - To what extent the writing, clarity and presentation of the application components influence the review.

6.2.3. Programmatic Review

To make funding recommendations and select the application(s) that, individually or collectively, will best achieve the program objectives, the following criteria are used by programmatic reviewers:

- Ratings and evaluations of peer reviewers
- Relevance to the priorities of the FY26 SCIRP, as evidenced by the following:
  - Adherence to the intent of the funding opportunity
  - Relative impact
  - Translation potential
  - Program portfolio composition
  - Relevance to military health

6.3. Application Review and Selection Process

6.3.1. Pre-Application

Following the pre-application screening, PIs and Initiating PIs will be notified as to whether they are invited to submit full applications. The estimated date when PIs can expect to receive notification of an invitation to submit a full application is indicated in Section 1, Basic Information About the Funding Opportunity. No feedback (e.g., a critique of the pre-application's strengths and weaknesses) is provided at this stage. Because the invitation to submit a full application is based on the contents of the pre-application, investigators should not change the title or research objectives after the pre-application is submitted.

6.3.2. Full Application

All applications are evaluated by scientists, clinicians and consumers in a two-tier review process. The first tier is **peer review**, the evaluation of applications against established criteria to determine technical merit, where each application is assessed for its own merit, independent of other applications. The second tier is **programmatic review**, a comparison-based process in which applications with high scientific and technical merit are further evaluated for programmatic relevance. Final recommendations for funding are subject to review and approval by a designated official. ***The highest-scoring applications from the first tier of review are not automatically recommended for funding. Funding recommendations depend on various***

factors as described in Section 6.2.3, Programmatic Review. Additional information about the two-tier process used by the CDMRP can be found on the CDMRP website.

Funding of applications received is contingent upon the availability of federal funds for this program, the number of applications received, the quality and merit of the applications as evaluated by peer and programmatic review, and the requirements of the government. Funds to be obligated on any award resulting from this funding opportunity will be available for use for a limited time period based on the fiscal year of the funds.

6.4. Risk, Integrity and Performance Information

Prior to making an assistance agreement award where the federal share is expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold, as defined in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 2, Part 200.1 (2 CFR 200.1), over the period of performance, the federal awarding agency is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is available in the SAM.

An applicant organization may review the SAM and submit comments on any information currently available about the organization that a federal awarding agency previously entered. The federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics and record of performance under federal awards when determining a recipient's qualification prior to award, according to the qualification standards of the Department of Defense Grant and Agreement Regulations (DoDGARs), Section 22.415.

In accordance with National Security Presidential Memorandum-33 and all associated laws, all fundamental research funded by the DOW must be evaluated for affiliations with foreign entities. All applicant organizations must disclose foreign affiliations of all key personnel named on applications. Failure to disclose foreign affiliations of key personnel shall lead to withdrawal of recommendations to fund applications. Applicant organizations may be presented with an opportunity to mitigate identified risks, particularly those pertaining to influence from foreign entities specified in law. Implementation of mitigation discussions and utilization of the DOD Component Decision Matrix must decrease risk of foreign influence in accordance with the above-mentioned laws and guidance prior to award.

7. Federal Award Notices

For each compliant full application received, the organizational representative(s) and PI will receive email notification when the funding recommendations are posted to eBRAP, typically within 6 weeks after programmatic review. At this time, each PI will receive a peer review summary statement on the strengths and weaknesses of the application and an information paper describing the application receipt and review process for the SCIRP award mechanisms. The information papers and a list of organizations and PIs recommended for funding are also posted on the program's page within the CDMRP website. After all awards are made, the CDMRP includes individual award information in a searchable database.

If an application is recommended for funding, after the email notification is posted to eBRAP, a government representative will contact the person authorized to negotiate on behalf of the recipient organization.

Only an appointed DHACA Grants Officer may obligate the government to the expenditure of funds to an extramural organization. No commitment on the part of the government should be inferred from discussions with any other individual. ***The award document signed by the Grants Officer is the official authorizing document (i.e., assistance agreement).***

Intragovernmental obligations of funding will be made according to the terms of a negotiated Inter-Agency Agreement and managed by a CDMRP Science Officer.

Funding obligated to ***intragovernmental and intramural DOW organizations*** will be sent through the Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request (MIPR), Funding Authorization Document (FAD) or Direct Charge Work Breakdown Structure processes. Transfer of funds is contingent upon appropriate safety and administrative approvals. Intragovernmental and intramural DOW investigators and collaborators must coordinate receipt and commitment of funds through their respective Resource Manager/Task Area Manager/Comptroller or equivalent Business Official.

An organization may, at its own risk and without the government's prior approval, incur obligations and expenditures to cover costs up to 90 days before the beginning date of the initial budget period of a new award.

8. Post-Award Requirements

8.1. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Applicable requirements in the DoDGARs found in 32 CFR, Chapter I, Subchapter C, and 2 CFR, Chapter XI, apply to grants and cooperative agreements resulting from this program announcement.

The GAI contain information regarding administrative requirements and national policy requirements.

Refer to full text of the latest DoD R&D Terms and Conditions and the DHACA Terms and Conditions for further information.

If there are delinquencies in technical reporting requirements for any existing DHA or U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command awards at the applicant organization, DHACA will not issue any new awards to the applicant organization until all delinquent reports have been submitted.

Applications recommended for funding that involve animals, human data, human specimens, human subjects or human cadavers must be reviewed for compliance with federal animal and/or human subjects protection requirements and must be approved by the DHA R&D Office of Research and Regulatory Compliance (ORRC), prior to implementation. This administrative review requirement is in addition to the local IACUC, Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Ethics Committee (EC) review.

Funded trials are required to post a copy of the informed consent form used to enroll subjects on a publicly available federal website in accordance with federal requirements described in 32 CFR 219. Additionally, the CDMRP requires all funded clinical trials to register and submit study results on ClinicalTrials.gov.

8.2. Reporting

Annual technical reports and quad charts, as well as a final technical report and quad chart, will be required. Annual and final technical progress reports must be prepared in accordance with the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR).

Enrollment reporting on the basis of sex, race, and ethnicity will be required with each annual and final progress report. The PHS Inclusion Enrollment Report is available in eBRAP. ***(Only required for clinical research and trials)***.

An Award Expiration Transition Plan, using the template available on eBRAP, must be submitted with the final progress report.

The Award Terms and Conditions will specify whether additional and/or more frequent reporting is required.

Awards resulting from this program announcement may entail additional reporting requirements related to recipient integrity and performance matters. Recipient organizations that have federal contract, grant and cooperative agreement awards with a cumulative total value greater than $10M are required to provide information to the SAM about certain civil, criminal and administrative proceedings that reached final disposition within the most recent 5-year period and that were connected with their performance of a federal award. These recipients are

required to disclose, semiannually, information about criminal, civil and administrative proceedings as specified in the applicable Representations.

8.3. Additional Requirements

PIs are expected to participate in at least one Interim Progress Review (IPR) for the funded project. For planning purposes, PIs can expect that the IPR will last no longer than one day and will be hosted virtually by the SCIRP. The invitation and format for the IPR will be provided by the Grants Officer's Representative at least 90 days prior to the scheduled IPR date.

Unless otherwise restricted, changes in the PI or organization will be allowed on a case-by-case basis, provided the intent of the award mechanism is met.

An organizational transfer of an award will not be allowed in the last year of the original period of performance or any extension thereof.

9. Other Information

9.1. Program Announcement Version

Questions related to this program announcement should refer to the program name, the program announcement name and the program announcement version code CD26_01d.

9.2. Administrative Actions

After receipt of pre-applications or full applications, the following administrative actions may occur.

9.2.1. Rejection

The following will result in administrative rejection of the pre-application:

- Preproposal Narrative is missing.

The following will result in administrative rejection of the full application:

- Project Narrative is missing.
- Budget is missing.
- Submission of an application for which a letter of invitation was not issued.
- Community Collaboration Plan (Attachment 7) is missing.
- **Early-Career Partnership Option:** Partnership Statement (Attachment 11 is missing.
- **Pilot Clinical Trial Option:** Pilot Clinical Trial Plan (Attachment 12) is missing.

9.2.2. Modification

- Pages exceeding the specified limits will be removed prior to reviewing all documents.
- Documents not requested will be removed.

9.2.3. Withdrawal

The following may result in administrative withdrawal of the full application:

- A member of the FY26 SCIRP Programmatic Panel is named as being involved in the development or execution of the research proposed or is found to have assisted in the pre-application or application processes.
- The application includes the name(s) of personnel from either of the CDMRP peer or programmatic review companies for which conflicts cannot be adequately mitigated. For FY26, the identities of the peer review contractor and the programmatic review contractor may be found on the CDMRP website.
- Personnel from applicant or collaborating organizations are found to have contacted persons involved in the review or approval process to gain protected evaluation information or to influence the evaluation process.

- The application from an extramural organization, including non-DOW federal agencies, is received through eBRAP.
- The federal government recipient organization (including an intramural DOW organization): (a) cannot accept and execute the entirety of the requested budget in FY26 funds; and/or (b) cannot coordinate the use of contractual, assistance or other appropriate agreements to provide funds to collaborators.
- The application fails to conform to this program announcement description.
- The application includes URLs, with the exception of links in the References Cited and Publication and/or Patent sections.
- The application includes research data that are classified and/or proposes research that may produce classified outcomes, or outcomes deemed sensitive to national security concerns.
- The invited application proposes a different research project than that described in the pre-application.
- The same research project is submitted to different funding opportunities within the same program and fiscal year.
- The proposed project consists entirely of a pilot clinical trial or multiple pilot clinical trials.
- Failure to submit all associated (Initiating and Partnering PI) applications by the deadline.
- The PI is named on more than one FY26 SCIRP Translational Research Award application.
- The PI, Initiating PI, or Partnering PI does not meet the eligibility criteria.
- One community partner (e.g., SCI Lived-Experience Consultant, representative of community-based organization) is not included on the research team as required by this program announcement.

9.2.4. Withhold

Applications that appear to involve research misconduct will be administratively withheld from further consideration pending organizational investigation. The organization will be required to provide the findings of the investigation to the DHACA Grants Officer for a determination of the final disposition of the application.

Appendix 1. Full Application Submission Checklist

Full Application Components	Uploaded	
	PI/Initiating PI	Partnering PI
SF424 Research & Related Application for Federal Assistance *(Grants.gov submissions only)*	☐	☐
Summary (Tab 1) and Application Contacts (Tab 2) *(eBRAP submissions only)*	☐	☐
Attachments		
Project Narrative – Attachment 1, upload as "ProjectNarrative.pdf"	☐	
Supporting Documentation – Attachment 2, upload as "Support.pdf"	☐	
Technical Abstract – Attachment 3, upload as "TechAbs.pdf"	☐	
Lay Abstract – Attachment 4, upload as "LayAbs.pdf"	☐	
Statement of Work – Attachment 5, upload as "SOW.pdf"	☐	☐
Impact Statement – Attachment 6, upload as "Impact.pdf"	☐	
Community Collaboration Plan – Attachment 7, upload as "Collaboration.pdf"	☐	
Translation Statement – Attachment 8, upload as "Translation.pdf"	☐	
Long-Term Goal – Attachment 9, upload as "Longterm.pdf"	☐	
Animal Research Plan *(Animal studies only)* – Attachment 10, upload as "AnimalResPlan.pdf"	☐	
Partnership Statement *(Early-Career Partnership Option only)* – Attachment 11, upload as "Partnership.pdf"	☐	
Pilot Clinical Trial Plan *(Pilot clinical trials only)* – Attachment 12, upload as "ClinTrialPlan.pdf"	☐	
Representations *(Grants.gov submissions only)* – Attachment 13, upload as "RequiredReps.pdf"	☐	☐
Suggested Intragovernmental/Intramural Budget Form *(if applicable)* – Attachment 14, upload as "IGBudget.pdf"	☐	☐
Additional Application Materials		
Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)	☐	☐
Attach Biographical Sketch for Senior/Key Persons (Biosketch_LastName.pdf)	☐	☐
Attach Current/Pending Support for Senior/Key Persons (Support_LastName.pdf)	☐	☐

Research & Related Budget	☐	☐
Project/Performance Site Location(s)	☐	☐
Research & Related Subaward Budget Attachment(s) ***(if applicable)***	☐	☐

Appendix 2. Acronym List

ARRIVE	Animal Research: Reporting In Vivo Experiments
CDMRP	Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CONSORT	Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials
DHA	Defense Health Agency
DHA R&D	Defense Health Agency Research and Development
DHACA	Defense Health Agency Contracting Activity
DOD	U.S. Department of Defense
DoDGARs	Department of Defense Grant and Agreement Regulations
DOW	U.S. Department of War
eBRAP	Electronic Biomedical Research Application Portal
EC	Ethics Committee
ET	Eastern Time
FAD	Funding Authorization Document
FY	Fiscal Year
GAI	General Application Instructions
IACUC	Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
IDE	Investigational Device Exemption
IND	Investigational New Drug
IPR	Interim Progress Review
IRB	Institutional Review Board
M	Million
MIPR	Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request
ORRC	Office of Research and Regulatory Compliance
PDF	Portable Document Format
PHS	Public Health Service
PI	Principal Investigator
R&D	Research and Development
RPPR	Research Performance Progress Report
SAM	System for Award Management
SCI	Spinal Cord Injury
SCIRP	Spinal Cord Injury Research Program
SF424 R&R	Standard Form 424 (Application for Federal Assistance, Research & Related)
SOW	Statement of Work
SPIRIT	Standard Protocol Items: Recommendations for Interventional Trials

STROBE	STrengthening the Reporting of OBservational studies in Epidemiology
TRA	Translational Research Award
UEI	Unique Entity Identifier
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
USC	United States Code
VA	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs