

June 9, 2010

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR REHABILITATION RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH ENHANCEMENT AWARD PROGRAM (REAP)**

1. PURPOSE: This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Notice announces the opportunity for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities to submit proposals for establishing Rehabilitation Research and Development Service (RR&D) Research Enhancement Award Program (REAP) with focus on research in high-priority areas relevant to the rehabilitation needs of Veterans. It also serves as the announcement for currently funded REAPs to submit their application for competitive renewal. *NOTE: Requirements for REAPs and instructions for submitting Letters of Intent (LOI) and applications are provided in Attachments A, B and C.*

2. BACKGROUND

a. VA RR&D REAP are intended to promote and support groups of VA investigators that are not affiliated under the domain of a currently funded RR&D Center or REAP. The goal of this program is to increase RR&D capacity by assisting VA sites that already show promise, as demonstrated by a history of VA peer-reviewed research and career development funding. This Notice will not support REAPs based predominantly at non-VA sites. Funding for two VA RR&D REAPs expires in Fiscal Year 2011. Each of these REAPs must submit an application for competitive renewal. Applications from new programs are reviewed concurrently.

(1) Current foci of RR&D REAPs are: Biological Therapeutics to Restore Nervous System Function (Baltimore); Rehabilitation Outcomes (Gainesville); and Multimodal Strategies for Improving Recovery from Brain Injury (San Francisco).

(2) REAPs up for competitive renewal are focused on Promotion of Functional Recovery Post Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) (Hines) and Auditory and Vestibular Dysfunction (Mountain Home).

(3) In addition, RR&D funds 17 Centers of Excellence (CoE) in Vision Impairment and Aging (Atlanta); Task-Oriented Exercise and Robotics in Neurological Disease (Baltimore); Innovative Visual Rehabilitation (Boston); Translational Research for Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Stress Disorders (Boston); Medical Complications of SCI (Bronx); Functional Electrical Stimulation (Cleveland); Advanced Platform Technology (Cleveland); Brain Injury Rehabilitation (Gainesville); Neurons to Networks (Houston); Prevention and Treatment of Visual Loss (Iowa City); Bone & Joint Rehabilitation (Palo Alto); Wheelchairs and Associated Rehabilitation Engineering (Pittsburgh); Rehabilitative Auditory Research (Portland); Restorative and Regenerative Medicine (Providence); Limb Loss and Prosthetic Engineering (Seattle); Maximizing Rehabilitation Outcomes (Tampa); and Restoration of Neurological Function (West Haven).

b. VA RR&D emphasizes and funds basic research to repair and optimize function of injured organs and tissues; prosthetics and neuroprosthetics research to replace what cannot be repaired; translational research to bring basic discoveries to clinical use; and clinical research to maximize

VHA NOTICE 2010-07

June 9, 2010

function. Proposed research foci must be in a rehabilitation area of importance to the Veteran population with evidence for potential clinical applicability. In addition to areas already funded, encouraged areas of new emphasis include, but are not limited to:

(1) **Regenerative Medicine.** Areas of programmatic need include:

(a) Neural repair – identification of the appropriate combination(s) of therapies for Spinal Cord Injuries (SCI), TBI, stroke, Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Parkinson’s Disease (PD), Alzheimer Disease (AD), and other chronic neurological disorders.

(b) Cell therapy (i.e., stem cells, Schwann cells, oligodendroglia, etc.).

(c) Neurotrophic factors (i.e., glial cell-line derived neurotrophic factor, brain derived neurotrophic factor, nerve growth factor, etc.).

(d) Delivery systems for neurotrophic factors or drugs (i.e., genetically-engineered cells, viral vectors, dissolvable-biomaterial polymers, etc.).

(e) Factors that overcome inhibition (i.e., chondroitinase ABC, Rho-kinase inhibitors).

(f) Bioengineered scaffolds (i.e., Agarose, extracellular matrix molecules, polylactide co-glycolide, etc.).

(2) **Musculoskeletal Repair.** Creation of bone and cartilage ex vivo with the:

(a) Appropriate biomechanical properties of endogenous tissue;

(b) Ability to withstand long-term usage; and

(c) Ability to integrate with endogenous tissue (biocompatibility).

(3) **Social Reintegration and Vocational-Work Rehabilitation.** Research in these high priority areas is encouraged in the following domains for Veterans with all types of disabilities:

(a) Development of appropriate outcome measures to determine the efficacy of interventions with disabled Veterans;

(b) Development of empirically validated interventions that optimize enduring work participation for disabled Veterans; and

(c) Maximization of social, economic and personal well-being using appropriate validated outcome measures.

(4) **Upper Extremity Orthotics and Prosthetics Engineering.** This new area of emphasis in VA arises from the unprecedented research investment in upper extremity prosthetics under the Defense Advance Research Projects Agency’s (DARPA’s) Revolutionizing Prosthetics from

2007-2009. Continuing this research in 2010, VA is the primary Federal transition partner to conduct the additional research to bring these arms into use by Veterans. A REAP (or CoE) in Upper Extremity Orthotics and Prosthetics Engineering would conduct additional technical and engineering research that might include, but not be limited to:

- (a) Identification of additional improvements that can be made in these arms, especially with respect to control inputs and strategies;
- (b) Development of methodology and technology to make upper extremity prosthetics as modular and interoperable as possible;
- (c) Development of additional applications for these arms, beyond Veterans with amputations, such as attaching the arms to wheelchairs to assist Veterans with high level SCI to perform activities of daily living;
- (d) Development of a research database to track deployment of these arms in VA, and identify protocols and best practices for the technical maintenance of the arms under conditions of daily use;
- (e) Conducting long-term post-market surveillance of the arms to identify and correct problems that may arise in long-term use; and
- (d) Initiating an engineering-training program for VA prosthetists who will be prescribing the arms within VA.

3. APPLICATION: One of the main objectives of a REAP is to help increase quality research in VA by attracting and training new investigators, especially those who are likely to continue their research career within VHA. The application needs to:

- a. Exhibit the prior success of eligible investigators in training pre- and post-doctorial fellows and junior investigators.
- b. Outline ongoing and future plans for recruiting and training new investigators.
- c. Include training plans which can also include clinicians that are already VA employees, but are junior in their research career.

4. FUNDING: REAP funding is not to be utilized as an additional resource for existing projects, but instead to support novel projects utilizing an innovative team approach. *NOTE: However, expansions of current projects, which show promising results, are encouraged and will receive full consideration.*

- a. Any VA medical facility with rehabilitation research capacity and with well-established academic partnerships is encouraged to apply. A minimum of three funded VA investigators are required. Maximum RR&D awards of core funding for recurring costs will be up to \$350,000 for 5 years to create a core of investigators to build capacity and facilitate the development of

VHA NOTICE 2010-07
June 9, 2010

proposals in under represented, but critical areas of rehabilitation.

b. Funds for recurring costs may be used for:

(1) Personnel costs for PhD investigators, programmers, statisticians, economists, research assistants, etc.

(2) Support for pilot projects or current project enhancements.

(3) Support for graduate students, including post-doctoral students.

(4) Supplies, equipment, and infrastructure support.

c. REAP applications are evaluated on the basis of the following major components:

(1) Compliance with eligibility criteria;

(2) Focus of the REAP on a rehabilitation problem of importance to the Veteran population;

(3) Scientific qualifications of the Director and qualifying investigators, and the strength of new collaborative activities between all investigators;

(4) Plans to develop new innovative research programs using pilot projects or core activities and the strength of the integration of pilot projects, training program, or core activities;

(5) Strength of the plan for training new investigators, including a strong training history;

(6) Plans to integrate basic, clinical, and translational approaches, where appropriate;

(7) Strength of proposed REAP administration, including fiscal and scientific oversight; and

(8) Commitment to the REAP by VA medical REAP and affiliated institution.

5. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANT SITES

a. Refer to Attachment A for REAP requirements.

b. All applicant sites must submit a LOI to Apply by July 31, 2010 (see Att. B). LOIs must be directed through the facility Associate Chief of Staff (ACOS) for Research and include:

(1) Names of key investigators,

(2) Certification from the facility that the principal investigators have at least 5/8th VA appointments, and

(3) Certification that space will be provided at the VA facility to support the proposed REAP.

c. The facility R&D Committee must review and approve all applications before submission. If a REAP is awarded, then an appropriate response and approval from Human Subject, Animal Safety, and Bio Safety Subcommittee is required.

d. Scientifically approved proposals will require administrative site visits in advance of making definitive funding determinations.

e. The REAP Director must be eligible to receive VA research support in accordance with VHA Handbook 1200.15 (eligibility must be established prior to submission of the proposal).

f. Annual non-competing progress reports for the REAP are reviewed administratively by RR&D to monitor performance against stated program plans. *NOTE: Unsatisfactory performance will result in probationary status or termination of funding.*

6. TIMELINE FOR PROPOSAL SUBMISSION, REVIEW, AND AWARD

a. Letters of Intent (see Att. B): July 31, 2010.

b. Proposals or applications are due in VHA Central Office (see Att. C): September 30, 2010.

c. Review: November 2010.

d. Administrative site visits: December 2010.

e. Funding Effective Date: Winter 2011.

7. FOLLOW UP RESPONSIBILITY: The Director, Rehabilitation Research and Development Service, is responsible for the content of this Notice. Questions may be addressed to the Jay Freedman, PhD, Scientific Program Manger, at 202-461-1699, or jay.freedman@va.gov.

Robert A. Petzel, M.D.
Under Secretary for Health

DISTRIBUTION: E-mailed to the VHA Publications Distribution List 6/10/2010

ATTACHMENT A

REQUIREMENTS FOR A RESEARCH ENHANCEMENT AWARD PROGRAM (REAP)

1. ELIGIBILITY

a. Investigators for the Research Enhancement Award Program (REAP) are to conduct rehabilitation research in a specified area.

b. Each investigator's research needs to be primarily focused on the nature of the contribution to research in the REAP.

c. To qualify for application, there must be at least three Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) funded principal investigators engaged in research projects at the time of application submission. There must be activity in one of the following categories:

(1) Merit Review funded (Rehabilitation Research and Development Service (RR&D), Clinical Sciences Research and Development Service (CSR&D), Biomedical Laboratory Research and Development (BLR&D) or Health Service Research and Development Service (HSR&D)) principal investigator at the time of application submission;

(2) VA RR&D Research Career Scientist (RCS) receiving VA salary at the RCS or Senior Research Career Scientist (SRCS) level; or

(3) VA RR&D Career Development awardees at the Career Development Award level 1 (CDA-1), Career Development Award level 2 (CDA-2), Career Development Transition Award (CDTA) or Career Development Enhancement (CDE) level. *NOTE: These investigators are referred to as the "eligible investigators." In addition to eligible investigators, VA investigators with research support other than Merit Review may be included if they contribute to and strengthen the Program.*

2. LOCAL SUPPORT. The VA medical center must support the RR&D REAP application, and agree to provide a minimum 25 percent protected time for the investigator coordinating program activities.

3. START-UP COSTS. In addition to recurring costs, a one-time request of up to \$100,000 may be submitted for equipment start-up. Requests must be well justified. Shared support by VA medical center, Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISN), or affiliated institution is encouraged and must be documented. Shared support may include cost sharing, facility renovation or equipment costs, service contracts on equipment, or personnel costs.

4. AWARD MAINTENANCE. Within a REAP, if the number of qualifying projects, awards, or investigators fall below three, a plan must be submitted to Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Central Office, Office of Research and Development (ORD) (12), describing how this

VHA NOTICE 2010-07
June 9, 2010

deficiency will be addressed. If this deficiency is not corrected within 9 months, funding will be phased out. Renewal depends on a competitive continuation application, and upon the availability of funds.

5. PILOT PROJECTS. Distinct pilot projects that are complimentary to the focus of the REAP mission are required. As part of REAP, new and innovative research ideas can be explored as pilot projects to acquire data supporting the validity and feasibility of these ideas. While such pilots may be related to ongoing RR&D funded studies, the applicant needs to clarify that the pilots are novel. Carefully conceived pilot projects are encouraged to explore unique approaches and establish feasibility for larger scale RR&D projects. In addition, mechanistic pilot research projects that bear relevance to the development or conduct of future clinical rehabilitation interventions are strongly encouraged as well. Investigators need to clearly document in their application the added value that REAP funds will provide to current RR&D efforts. The pilot studies are a vehicle to help encourage and promote interdisciplinary research collaborations among investigators and trainees within and throughout VA medical centers.

6. PROGRAM PERFORMANCE. Each REAP Program is required to submit to VA Central Office, ORD (12), an annual budget and research performance report. Performance measures include:

- a. Importance of major research findings from the REAP;
- b. Productivity as indicated by the number of publications, presentations, and new funding awards directly attributable to REAP Pilot projects or core activities and patents;
- c. Peer-reviewed funding of REAP Investigators in comparison to their pre-REAP funding levels;
- d. Status of the training program, including the role of trainees in REAP pilot projects or core activities, and trainee progress towards the next career level;
- e. Status of pilot projects including ongoing, new, concluded, and those leading to new funding awards; and
- f. Evidence of local, national, and international recognition of the REAP and its members.

NOTE: *Unsatisfactory performance will result in probationary status or a termination of funding.*

ATTACHMENT B

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING A LETTER OF INTENT (LOI)
FOR A REHABILITATION RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (RR&D)
RESEARCH ENHANCEMENT AWARD PROGRAM (REAP)**

1. SCOPE

a. **The Letter of Intent (LOI) Review.** The LOI review serves to:

(1) Confirm that each proposal forwarded in response to this Notice is within the announced intent and scope of Rehabilitation Research and Development Service (RR&D) Research Enhancement Award Program (REAP); and

(2) Identify and resolve major problems such as Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) investigator eligibility and VA off-site research issues prior to allowing the submission of a full proposal.

b. **Due Date.** LOIs to submit proposals to establish RR&D REAPs are due on July 31, 2010. LOIs received after this date will not be reviewed. Proposals will not be accepted without an approved LOI.

c. **Review Process.** LOIs are reviewed for scientific merit, relevance to Veterans' needs, RR&D priority areas, and whether the proposed research advances the knowledge base of rehabilitation research. Written notification regarding results of the review is sent within 6 weeks through the facility Office of the Associate Chief of Staff (ACOS) for Research and Development (R&D). An investigator must have an approved LOI in order to submit a proposal to establish a RR&D REAP for review.

d. **Eligibility.** RR&D is an intramural research program. All applicants (i.e., the Principal Investigator (PI) and any Co-PI for VA research funds) must hold a minimum 5/8th VA salaried position. Individuals with less than a 5/8th VA appointment are encouraged to seek at least a 5/8th VA official appointment. Investigators wishing to join VA must indicate so in writing within the context of the LOI. Should an applicant's proposal be approved, funding is not forwarded until the VA appointment is secured.

e. **Off-Site Research.** As an intramural program, it is VHA policy to ensure that all VA-funded research is performed within VA medical REAPs or VA-leased space, except when off-site facilities provide unique research opportunities. Any investigator who applies for VA research support and who has performed or seeks permission to perform research outside of VA medical REAPs, VA-owned or VA-leased space, must request a waiver from RR&D to perform all or a portion of a VA-funded research off-site. The request for a waiver is to accompany the LOI and must be received no later than 60 days prior to the proposal submission due date (see VHA Handbook 1200.16).

VHA NOTICE 2010-07

June 9, 2010

2. FORMAT

a. **Margins.** Use at least 1-inch margins on all four sides. Consecutively number pages in lower right corner.

b. **Font Style and Size.** Use either 12-Times New Roman or 11 Point-Arial. *NOTE: Any LOI using low quality or small print will be returned without review. Use bold type for all major section headings, and separate major sections with a double space.*

3. CONTENT

a. VA Form 10-1313-13, Cover Sheet, must be submitted with a LOI. Check applicable categories in each box and type in all requested information. *NOTE: In Box #2, marked Program Area, state priority area and specify "REAP."*

b. The information contained in the LOI can be up to three pages of text, plus one page of cited references. An additional page describing the PI's experience in the proposed research area is allowed.

c. **Text Pages (not to exceed three pages).** At the top of each page, type PI's name and Project Title and date. In the following order, state:

(1) **Purpose.** List the goals and specific objectives of the proposed program of research (use approximately 1/4 page).

(2) **Background (use approximately 1/2 page).**

(a) State the scientific rationale for the proposed research and its relationship to other major research findings.

(b) Explain how this research will advance knowledge in rehabilitation research.

(c) Describe the significance of the research and how it relates to RR&D priority areas. Indicate how this research directly benefits Veterans and how it contributes to the quality of services provided by VA.

(3) **Expected Outcomes or Products.** Describe the outcome in terms of expected time and resources needed to develop a REAP program in this area (use approximately 1/4 page).

(4) **Proposed Areas of Study.** Outline the proposed areas of study (use approximately one page).

(a) Identify VA patient population, sample size, and rationale for inclusion or exclusion of population served; additional efforts must be exerted to include women and members of diverse ethnic and racial groups.

(b) Identify key issues that may have an impact on the success of the REAP.

(c) Specify if proposed research is with animals and, if so, what is the time frame for clinical application.

(d) Indicate implications for technology transfer and potential for replication.

(5) **Participants.** Identify PI(s), co-investigators, and consultants; state their areas of expertise.

(6) **Resource and Budget.** RR&D REAPs are funded for 5 years with up to \$350,000 a year. In addition, a one-time request of up to \$100,000 may be submitted for equipment start-up.

(7) **Project History**

(a) Indicate if this REAP is new, a continuation of an existing REAP (years funded), or related to a previously disapproved REAP submission.

(b) Indicate the Project number, title, and date of the previous related submission.

(8) **Research Site.** State the name of the facility where the majority of research (patients and laboratory work) will take place (Item 6 on VA Form 10-1313-13, Cover sheet).

4. SUBMITTING THE LOI. An electronic copy of the LOI is required.

a. The LOI must be signed by either the ACOS for R&D, R&D Coordinator, or an appropriate designee. *NOTE: LOIs from R&D regionalized facilities will not be accepted without being processed through the appropriate research office.*

b. The LOI must be sent as a single PDF file to rrreviews@va.gov by July 31, 2010. Name the file as follows: principal investigator's last name_station number_REAPLOI (e.g., Jones_122_REAPLOI). Use the following text in the email "Subject:" line: [insert PI last name] REAP LOI. *NOTE: LOIs received after July 31, 2010, will not be accepted.*

5. INQUIRIES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION. Inquiries should be directed to Jay Freedman, PhD, at 202-461-1699 or jay.freedman@va.gov.

ATTACHMENT C

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION
REHABILITATION RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (RR&D) REAPS**

1. GENERAL. Whether preparing a first-time or competing renewal application, the proposal must be well organized, clearly presented, and complete without presumption of reliance on previous proposal submissions or of assumed public common knowledge.

2. FORMS. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Forms 10-1313-1 through 8, Merit Review Application, are to be used for REAP proposals. Forms are available through each VA facility's Office of Associate Chief of Staff (ACOS) for Research and Development (R&D), or equivalent.

3. CONTENT ORDER

a. **VA Form 10-1313-1, Merit Review Application.** Provide brief identifying information. Items which may require clarification are:

(1) **Items 1, 2, and 4.** Leave blank.

(2) **Item 3.** Review group should be identified as "REAP."

(3) **Item 9.** List the REAP Director as Principal Investigator (PI).

(4) **Item 10.** REAP the title; it needs to be short and easily identify the program and its focus.

(5) **Item 11.** Amount requested should be for fiscal years.

b. **VA Form 10-1313-2, Summary Description of Program.** Provide a brief narrative scientific abstract not to exceed 500 words. List key words that best describe the program's scientific disciplines and research focus.

c. **Table of Contents.**

d. **Approved Letter of Intent (LOI).**

e. **Narrative.** Should not exceed twenty pages (including figures and tables), with no more than five additional pages for references. Components expected to be contained in the narrative include:

(1) **Background on the Program.** Address the history and background of the group and its interaction with your VA medical center and affiliated university in the area of the proposed REAP.

VHA NOTICE 2010-07
June 9, 2010

(2) Research Focus

(a) Describe the research focus and goals of the REAP. The central unifying theme of the REAP should be derived from the expertise and direction of the currently-funded research and plans for future-funded research.

(b) Describe the current status of, and future plans for, integration of basic (if applicable), clinical, and translational components of the REAP.

(3) Personnel

(a) List the name, academic title, VA title, and VA employment status (8ths) for each Qualifying Investigator.

(b) List the qualifying Merit Review or National Institute of Health (NIH) grant title, inclusive dates, and total dollars for each Qualifying Investigator.

(c) List the source, title, total amount, and inclusive dates for all other active and pending funding for each Qualifying Investigator.

(d) List other VA investigators who will participate in the REAP, and provide academic and funding information. *NOTE: Clearly identify the Qualifying Investigators.*

(4) Coordination of Activities

(a) Identify the individual who is responsible for coordination of REAP activities. Describe how the activities are coordinated, including how decisions will be made to initiate or terminate pilot projects and how trainees are selected.

(b) Identify the individual responsible for administration of the funds, and describe how the funds will be administered.

(5) Resources

(a) Describe the research facilities available, both within the VA medical center and through affiliated intuitions. Distinguish between those resources that are currently in place, and those resources that must be added to fulfill the REAP mission.

(b) Describe the role of the REAP in supporting the individual funded research. Describe the population of patients (or intended population).

(6) Training

(a) List the names of current and past trainees supervised by each REAP investigator.

(b) Identify the source of funds to support each trainee, duration of training, and current positions held by past trainees.

(c) List all past, current, and submitted Career Development applicants for whom the REAP investigators are mentors.

(d) Describe plans for recruitment and funding of future research trainees.

(e) Describe in detail the training program that is, or will be, in place to provide a successful training experience, including formal course work, seminars, data sessions, and plans for monitoring progress. Trainees should be supported at least in part by VA funds.

(f) Describe the potential pathway for a VA career for each proposed trainee. If funds to support trainees are not requested, explain how trainees will be encouraged to pursue a research career within VA.

(7) **Advantages of a REAP Award to the VA Medical Center.** REAP awards are intended to provide an added dimension to a VA medical center's research activities. This includes capability and potential for a net accomplishment greater than that possible by the support of individual components alone. An explanation of how this expectation will be met is critical to the establishment of the REAP.

(a) Describe the special advantages of having this REAP at your VA medical center.

(b) Describe the anticipated impact, if any, of this REAP on the clinical care of the patients in the VA medical center.

(8) **New Initiatives (Pilot Projects).** Describe plans to develop new and innovative projects to enhance and extend the current research activity. Collaborations among Qualifying Investigators are essential and inclusion of supporting investigators is permissible. The pilot projects should be used as a vehicle for training, as well as for the exploration and development of innovative ideas. Limit the description of each project to three pages, and submit in the following format:

(a) Names of Investigators

(b) Title of Proposed Project

(c) Background. Indicate the scientific basis (rationale) for the research and its relationship to other major research findings. Describe the significance of the research, and its relevance to the mission of VA.

(d) Research Objectives. Outline precisely and clearly the goals of the planned project, including the hypothesis to be tested and the specific objectives of the project.

(e) Project Design and Methods. Briefly define and describe the approach to the research references.

f. **VA Form 10-1313-3, Current Funds and First Year Request for Program, and VA Form 10-1313-4, Estimated Expenses of Program.** These forms are to be used to submit the proposed 5-year budget.

VHA NOTICE 2010-07
June 9, 2010

g. **VA Forms 10-1313-5, Investigator's Biographic Sketch, and VA Form 10-1313-6, Investigator's Bibliography.** These forms are to be used to provide biographical sketches and a list of up to ten recent or significant publications for each Qualifying Investigator, followed by the same forms for other participating investigators. Limit the bibliography to two pages for each investigator. Include up to two manuscript reprints, which the PI feels best reflect work in the proposed area.

h. **VA Form 10-1313-7, Investigator's Total VA and Non-VA Research Support and VA Form 10-1313-8, Summary Statement Abstract and Budget Summary.** These forms are to be used to list each Qualifying Investigator; include VA Form 10-1313A, Merit Review Board Summary Statement, or other funding agency front sheet, abstract and budget summary for each Federal and non-Federal funded proposal for each Qualifying Investigator.

i. **Appendixes.** Appendixes are to be identified and labeled.

(1) A letter of commitment from the VA medical facility Director and a letter of approval from the R&D Committee are required for review. The letters need to include a statement agreeing to provide 25 percent protected time to the coordinator of the REAP.

(2) Include letters of commitment and memoranda of understanding with collaborating institutions.

j. **Authorization To Share Materials For Review.** It is expected that VA and non-VA reviewers will review proposals. Append the following statement, signed by the PI and Co-PI: "VA is authorized to share copies of all materials included in this application, for the purpose of scientific merit review."

4. SUBMISSION. Applications must be submitted as a single PDF file on a CD. Please label the CD with the date, principal investigator's name and the title of the proposed project. Applications must be mailed to:

Rehabilitation Research and Development Service (122P)
Office of Research and Development
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420
202-461-1740
Attn: REAP

***NOTE:** Proposals received after September 30, 2010, will not be reviewed. Proposals will not be accepted without an approved LOI. LOIs received after July 31, 2010, will not be accepted.*