



Connections for All

Tip Sheet

Government Funding Sources for Assistive Technology

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➤ Be familiar with key federal access initiatives

Serving people with disabilities in mainstream organizations is becoming a priority in federal funding. Several key laws have established federal funding streams for individuals with disabilities and for institutions that serve them, such as the **Rehabilitation Act**, which provides money to the states to serve clients, including equipment purchase and tuition; **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**, which requires that AT be considered for every student with a disability and if it is found to be necessary, the school system must purchase it; and **Medicare**, which pays for durable medical equipment (e.g. wheelchairs, walkers) and communication devices for people with speech impairments.

➤ Learn about Assistive Technology Act and state programs

Under the 2004 Assistive Technology Act, some states receive funding for Alternative Finance Programs that provide loans to individuals for AT devices and services. The AT Act also funds State AT Programs that provide information resources to people with disabilities, including additional sources for funding. Many states have developed guides on getting AT funding in their state. They also may provide equipment loan services and equipment demonstration.

➤ Seek assistive technology funding for individual participants

Most funding available to purchase assistive technology is available to individuals with disabilities through schools, Medicare/Medicaid, or private insurance companies. Another source is the rehabilitation agency in each state (name varies by state) responsible for providing rehab clients with tools to secure employment or additional education that will lead to employment.

➤ Connect to federally funded support networks

The federal government funds two support networks, which can help you with outreach, as well as making recommendations about sources of funding or assistance. They are the **Independent Living Centers** (funded under the Rehab Act) and the **Parent Training and Information Centers** (funding under IDEA).

➤ Look for disability related programs in federal agencies

Most government agencies have programs, including grant programs, specifically designed to serve people with disabilities. There may be a number of grants that might be appropriate to your CTC, especially if you collaborate on your proposal and project with other local organizations or educational entities.





Connections for All *Resources*

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Federal Agencies

- ◆ Housing and Urban Development (HUD) (<http://www.hud.gov>)
- ◆ Department of Labor (<http://www.dol.gov>)
- ◆ Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) (<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/>)
- ◆ Department of Health & Human Services (<http://www.dhhs.gov>)
- ◆ Social Security Administration's Ticket To Work program, which offers funding for entities that provide return-to-work services to Social Security beneficiaries with disabilities (<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work/ResourcesToolkit/ENnetwork.html>)

State Programs

Many of the above federal agencies have equivalent agencies in each state, which may also make grants to community-based organizations and schools.

- ◆ Department of Labor, Employment & Training, Disability Online (DoL/ETA), a portal for disability-related programs (<http://www.doleta.gov/disability/>)
- ◆ RESNA, Assistive Technology Act state alternative financing activities (<http://www.resna.org/taproject/activities/financing/statefinancing.htm>)
- ◆ RESNA, State Assistive Technology Programs (<http://www.resna.org/taproject/at/stateprograms.html>)
- ◆ Assistive Technology Alternative Financing Programs and Access to Telework Loan Programs, Administered by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) (<http://www.resna.org/AFTAP/state/>)

Government-Funded Networks

- ◆ Independent Living Centers (<http://www.ilru.org/html/publications/directory/>)
- ◆ Parent Training and Information Centers (<http://www.taalliance.org/Centers/>)

Other Resources

- ◆ C4All Tip Sheet "Funding Strategies for Assistive Technology" (http://www.ctcnet.org/what/initiatives/C4All/resources/C4All_Tip_Sheet_AT_Funding_Strategies.pdf)

