

Spinal Cord Injury Research Funding Through the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs

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Transforming Healthcare through Innovative and Impactful Research



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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
**CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED
MEDICAL RESEARCH PROGRAMS**

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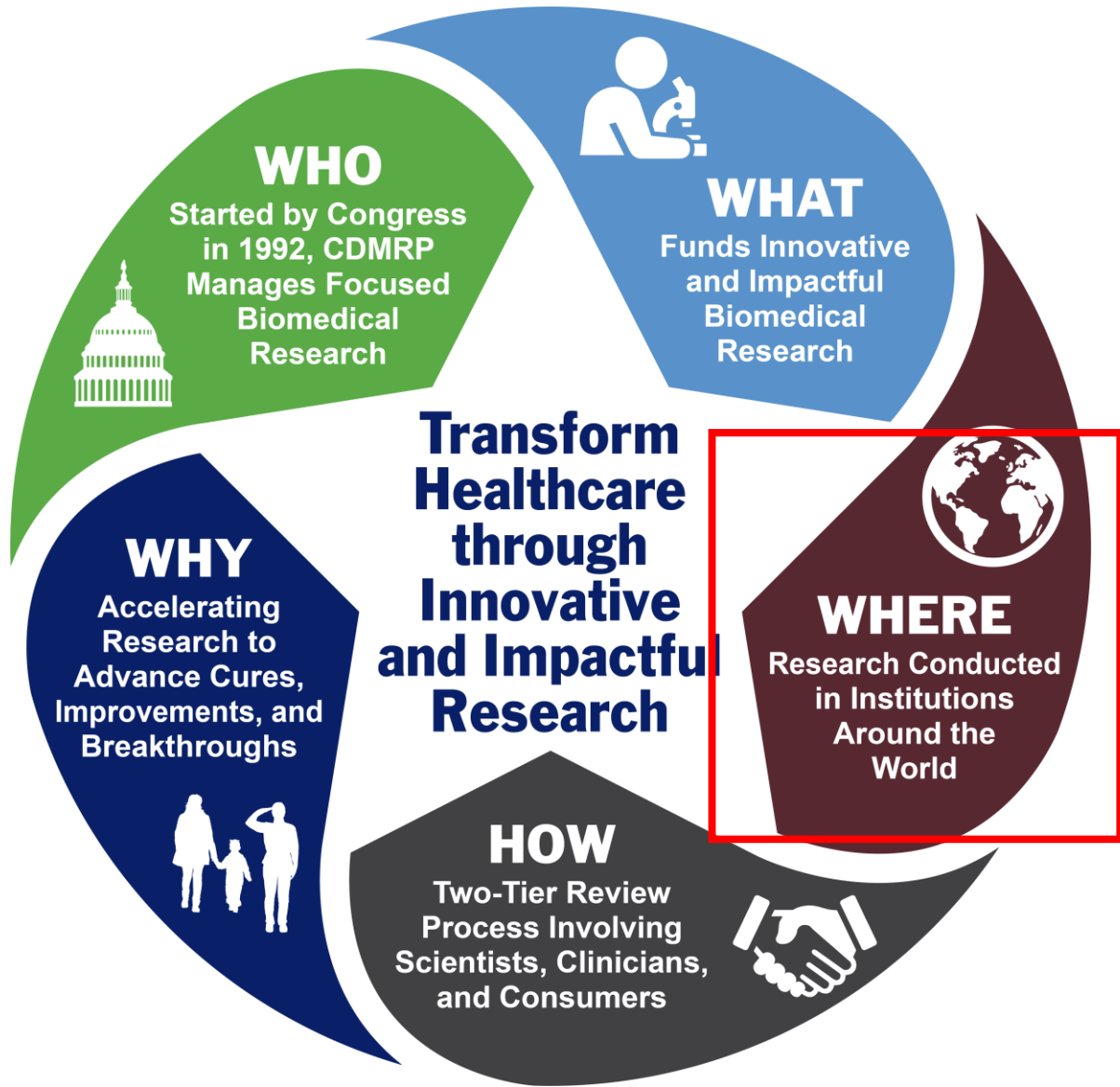
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Major Take-Aways Specific to this Audience



- ***DOD-CDMRP has a program specifically dedicated to funding Spinal Cord Injury Research.*** This Spinal Cord Injury Research Program (SCIRP) is congressionally directed and has a dedicated line-item appropriation within the Defense budget.
- ***Funding opportunities offered through the SCIRP are targeted*** to solicit research within discrete domains within the research and development continuum and identify the current program research priorities (focus areas) that applicants must address.
- Independent investigators at ***all career levels*** may be named by the organization as the Principal Investigator (PI) or Initiating PI on any application to the SCIRP.
- SCIRP funding opportunities offer an ***Early-Career Partnering Principal Investigator Option*** which is structured to accommodate two PIs who will work together on a single research project. At least one investigator must have at least 3 years research experience (independent or non-independent) beyond a terminal degree but no more than 7 years within their first faculty appointment, or equivalent independent research position.

To be funded your project must be scientifically sound AND address the SCIRP's programmatic goals which are outlined in the funding opportunity announcement



CDMRP is an Office Within the Department of Defense

Mission

Responsibly manage collaborative research that discovers, develops, and delivers health care solutions for Service Members, their Families, Veterans, and the American public.



<https://cdmrp.health.mil>

Spinal Cord Injury Research Program (SCIRP)



- **History:** SCIRP was established in fiscal year 2009 (FY09) to support medical research into traumatic spinal cord injury and treatments.
- **Vision:** Advance the treatment and management of spinal cord injury and ameliorate its consequences.
- **Mission:** 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

FY24 Anticipated
Appropriation: \$40M



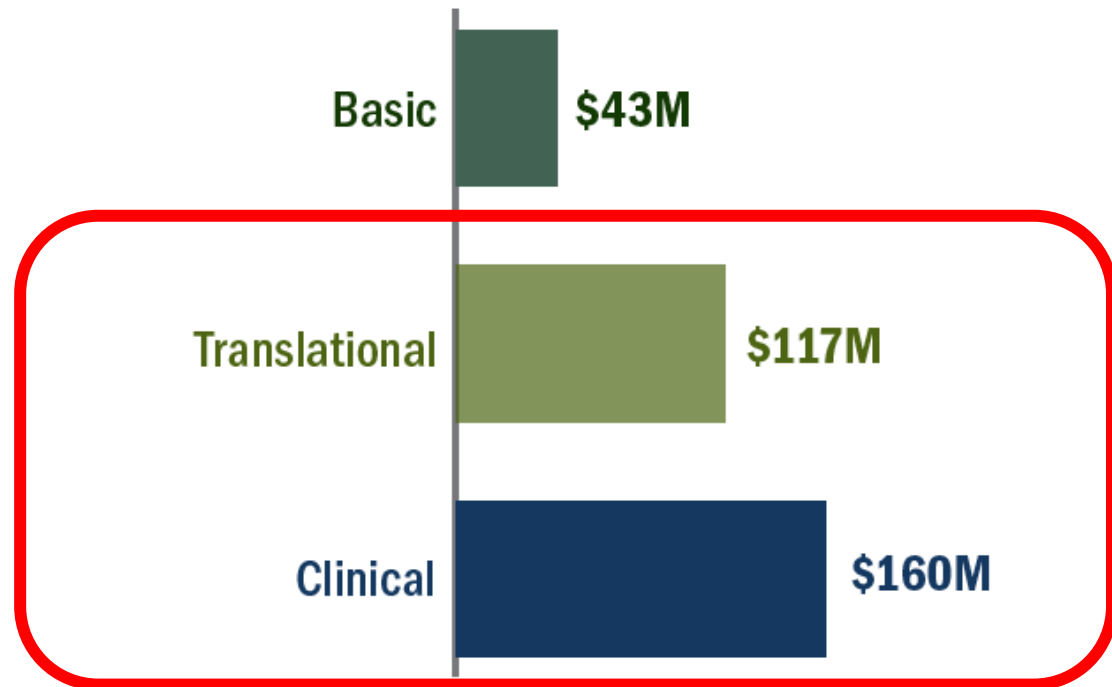
<https://cdmrp.army.mil/scirp/>

A promotional poster for the Spinal Cord Injury Research Program. The top half features a photograph of two young women walking outside a modern building; one is in a motorized wheelchair and the other is walking. Below the photo, the text "Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs" is written in white. Underneath that is the "CDMRP" logo with the Department of Defense seal. To the right is a circular collage of images showing a scientist with a microscope, a soldier in a military vehicle, a woman in a wheelchair, and a soldier in a black t-shirt with "ARMY" on it. At the bottom right is the U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command logo, which includes a gold shield with a white caduceus and a red flame.

SCIRP Invests Across the SCI Research Continuum

The SCIRP challenges the scientific community to design research that will **advance the development or translation of health care solutions** for people living with SCI. The program also supports innovative research that fosters new directions or addresses neglected issues in the field of traumatic SCI, although studies focused exclusively on target identification are discouraged. The SCIRP encourages impactful research **across the continuum of care from time-of-injury and through the life span** that is well reasoned and scientifically supported.

SCIRP Portfolio Investment FY09-FY21



Acute Injury:
\$79M

Chronic Injury:
\$252M



SCIRP Funding Mechanisms at a Glance



Investigator Initiated Research Award: Intended to support studies that have the potential to make an important contribution to SCI research, patient care, and/or quality of life

Translational Research Award: Intended to support translational research that will accelerate the movement of promising ideas in SCI research into clinical applications

Clinical Translation Research Award: Supports high-impact and/or new/emerging clinical research that may not be ready for a larger-scale clinical trial and for which feasibility/pilot/optimization studies are necessary.

Clinical Trial Award: Supports the rapid implementation of clinical trials with the potential to have a significant impact on the treatment or management of SCI

Applications submitted to the SCIRP must address one or more of these Focus Areas:



Preserving and protecting spinal cord tissue at time of injury for improved neurologic outcomes



Identifying and validating biomarkers for diagnosis, prognosis, and for evaluation of treatment efficacies



Developing, testing, and validating promising interventions to address bowel, genitourinary, neuropathic pain, cardiopulmonary, or autonomic dysfunction in people with SCI



Investigating psychosocial issues relevant to people with SCI, their families, and/or their care-partners



Rehabilitation and regeneration – maximizing the function of the residual neural circuitry, including harnessing neuroplasticity and recovery to improve function after SCI

Other priorities:

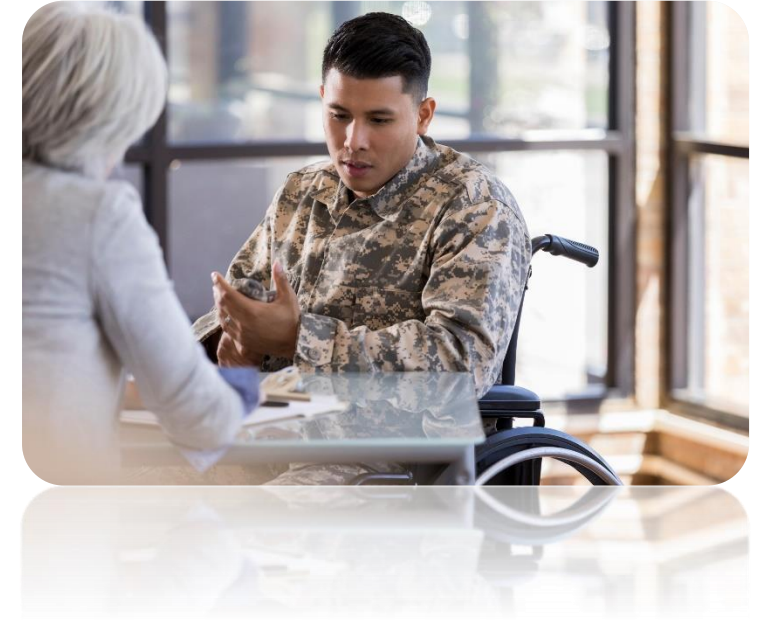
- Research should demonstrate a clear path to advancing products/outcomes toward clinical implementation.
- Proposed research must be relevant to active-duty Service Members, Veterans, military beneficiaries, and/or the American public. Relevance to military health is a review criteria.
- Applications should describe the short- and long-term impact of the study and indicate the likelihood that a successful outcome of the research project will lead to a practical application for individuals living with SCI.

Requirement for Community Partnership

The SCIRP believes that capturing and integrating the unique perspectives of people living with SCI throughout the entire research and development process will foster better and more impactful research outcomes. Research teams are therefore required to establish and utilize effective and equitable collaborations and partnerships with community members to maximize the translational and impact potential of the proposed research.

Key Elements of the Requirement

- Consultant(s) are named at time of pre-application submission
- Their role in the project should be independent of their employment, and they cannot be employees of any of the organizations participating in the application
- A Community Partnership Plan is submitted with full application
 - ❖ Describes the collaborative research approach that will be used (e.g., Lived Experience Consultation, partnership with community-based organization, community advisory board, etc.)
 - ❖ Explains how the input has and/or will be meaningfully integrated and incorporated into the needs assessment, planning, design, execution, analysis, and/or dissemination of the research
- Investigator-Initiated Research Award applications are exempt from this requirement



News & Highlights

[Zeroing in on Neuropathic Pain in Spinal Cord Injury](#)

[David Smith — A Legacy of SCI Advocacy and Opportunity](#)

[Use of an exoskeleton brings hope to one Army Veteran \(external link\)](#)

[Feel again: Advancements in prosthetics limb technology allow feeling, control \(external link\)](#)

[FY22 SCIRP Recommended for Funding List](#)

[Virginia Doctors Hope New Clinical Trial Helps Paralyzed Veterans Walk Again \(external link\)](#)

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[SCIRP Program Summary Sheet](#)

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Spinal Cord Injury

Vision – Advance the treatment and management of spinal cord injury and ameliorate its consequences relevant to injured Service members

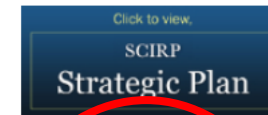
Spinal cord injuries (SCIs) are complex neurotraumatic wounds affecting military Service members, their families, Veterans, and the general population. These are serious injuries with long-term consequences requiring lifelong care. It is estimated that about 300,000 individuals are living with an SCI, and this number continues to grow as over 17,000 new cases occur in the U.S. each year. For military populations, the current rate of SCI is relatively low; however, these injuries are still a major cause of medical discharge from Service. Furthermore, between 2000 and 2009, during the height of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the rate of SCI in the military was nearly eight times that of the civilian population. As a result, the Department of Veterans Affairs is the largest single SCI care network, providing services for 10%–20% of all individuals living with an SCI in the U.S.

The Spinal Cord Injury Research Program (SCIRP) was established by Congress in fiscal year 2009 (FY09), in part as a response to the high rates of SCI observed in Warfighters returning home from duty. The Congressional intent was to establish a program to enhance the long-term care of wounded Soldiers. To this end, the SCIRP has invested over \$200 million (M) into research and development efforts guided by the vision to advance the treatment and management of SCI and ameliorate its consequences relevant to injured Service members.

The SCIRP acknowledges the importance of the consumer perspective and believes that these individuals can and should be involved in all aspects of research and development. From its inception, the SCIRP has engaged people with lived SCI experience throughout the peer and programmatic review process to ensure that the needs of the SCI community are being addressed and met by SCIRP-funded research. Taking this initiative a step further, in FY19, the SCIRP began encouraging and/or requiring (as determined by program announcements) that individuals with lived SCI experience be integrated into the research team for newly funded projects. Applicants are asked to involve people with an SCI, their family members, and/or their care partners to provide ongoing advice and consultation throughout the planning and implementation of the research project. The SCIRP believes that capturing and integrating the unique perspectives and experiences of these individuals will enable better and more impactful outcomes for people living with SCI.



[Click on Image to View Program Booklet](#)



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<https://cdmrp.health.mil/SCIRP>

FY24 Funding Opportunities

◆ The SCIRP funding pre-announcement is now available.

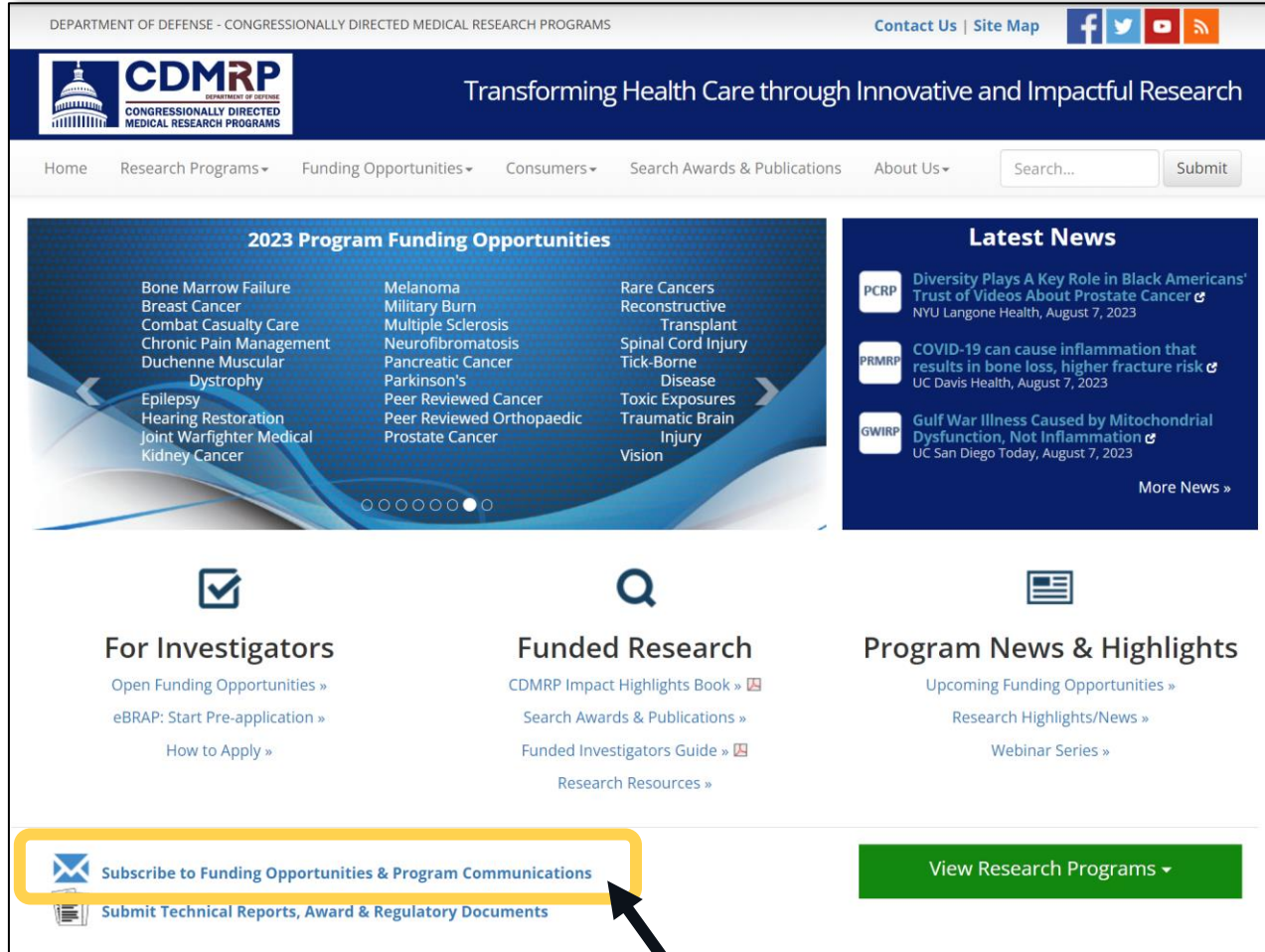
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Award Mechanism	Eligibility	Key Mechanism Elements	Funding
Clinical Trial Award	<p>Principal Investigator (PI): Independent investigators at all career levels</p> <p>Optional Early-Career Partnering PI: An investigator with at least 3 years research experience (independent or non-independent) beyond a terminal degree but no more than 7 years within their first faculty appointment, or equivalent independent research position.</p>	<p><i>Pre-application submission is required; full application submission is by invitation only.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports the rapid implementation of clinical trials with the potential to have a significant impact on the treatment or management of spinal cord injury (SCI). Proposed projects may range from small proof-of-concept trials to demonstrate feasibility or inform the design of more advanced trials, through large-scale trials to determine efficacy in relevant populations. Alternative trial designs to traditional randomized clinical trials are allowed but should be appropriate to the objective of the trial. Applications are expected to name at least two community partners (e.g., SCI Lived Experience Consultants, representatives of community-based organizations) who will provide advice and consultation throughout the planning and implementation of the research project. <p><i>Allows for an Early-Career Partnering PI Option</i></p>	<p><u><i>Single PI Option:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum funding of \$3.00 million (M) for direct costs (plus indirect costs) Maximum period of performance is 4 years <p><u><i>Early-Career Partnering PI Option:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum funding of \$3.10M for direct costs (plus indirect costs) Maximum period of performance is 4 years

◆ FY24 Funding Opportunities are expected to be released around **March** or **April**

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Latest News

- PCRP** Diversity Plays A Key Role in Black Americans' Trust of Videos About Prostate Cancer [NYU Langone Health, August 7, 2023](#)
- PRMRP** COVID-19 can cause inflammation that results in bone loss, higher fracture risk [UC Davis Health, August 7, 2023](#)
- GWIRP** Gulf War Illness Caused by Mitochondrial Dysfunction, Not Inflammation [UC San Diego Today, August 7, 2023](#)

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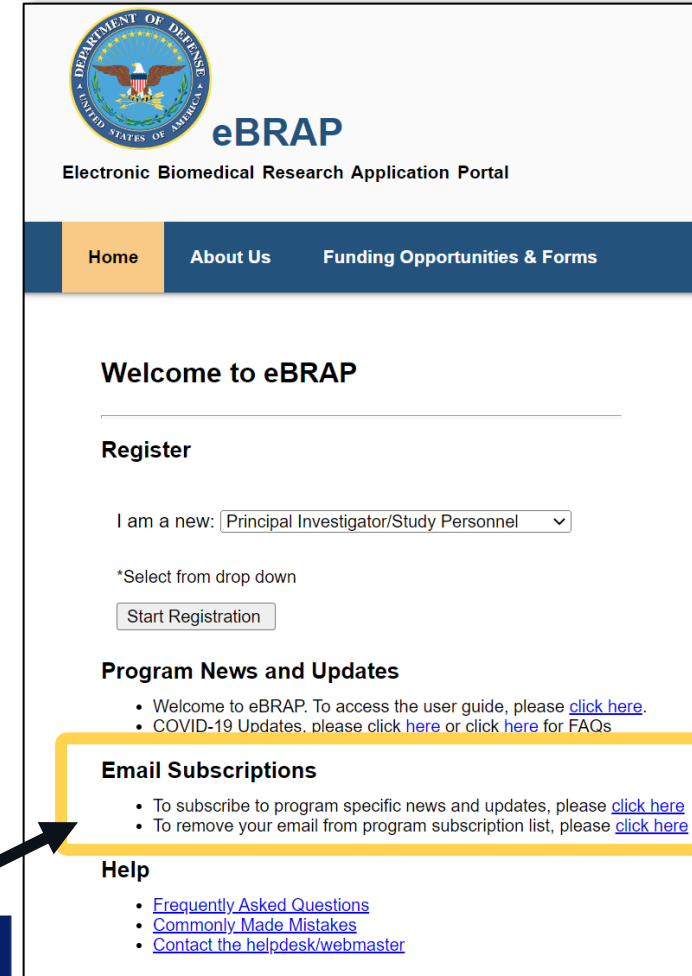
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