



Special Olympics



Request for Applications

Fitness Evaluation Consultant

Issue Date: August 11th, 2025
Response Due Date: September 12th, 2025

Special Olympics

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Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities



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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Through this Request for Proposal (RFP), Special Olympics International (SOI) will identify a Fitness Evaluation consultant to work closely with the Research & Evaluation and Fitness teams at SOI to advance the evaluation of Special Olympics fitness programming.

This includes supporting U.S.-based Special Olympics Programs with evaluation planning and implementation, developing and refining assessment tools, coordinating feasibility studies, analyzing existing datasets, and contributing to peer-reviewed publications and internal reports.

This is a unique opportunity to contribute to inclusive health research and evaluation, with a focus on improving fitness outcomes for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Special Olympics Health

Special Olympics provides year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities (ID), giving them opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

Special Olympics' work goes beyond sports events, aiming to drive social change, improve the health of our athletes and build inclusive communities that enable full social participation and life-long fitness for people with ID throughout the world. Through our more than 50 years of experience, we know that adults and children with ID are every society's most neglected population.

SOI's Health strategy is directed towards health equity and reducing disparities for the 5 million Special Olympics athletes and 80 million people with ID globally through four strategic pillars:

- (1) Prevention, including our Young Athletes early childhood intervention program for children less than 8, as well as our lifespan fitness programs and health promotion activities,
- (2) Assessment directed at early detection of the most common and deadly conditions for people with ID and making connections to care, using continuous quality improvement and monitoring outcomes for success,
- (3) Training of the health care workforce using evidence-based active learning that employs virtual and hands-on interactions, and
- (4) Promoting health systems reform through awareness-building of this population's health-related vulnerabilities and promoting strong advocacy and outreach.

The Fitness Evaluation Consultant work focuses on the 1st strategic pillar of prevention through fitness programming. Fitness is an important aspect of the Special Olympics mission. Physical activity, adequate nutrition and hydration enhance athletes' sports performance and improve health and overall quality of life. Special Olympics supports a variety of programs to engage athletes and their families, caregivers, and friends in year-round fitness, including Unified Fitness Clubs, Fit Families and Friends, and SOFit.

Special Olympics is interested in evaluating the effectiveness of fitness programming--not only to affirm programs work as intended, but also to provide objective data that can provide support for refinement and expansion.



SCOPE OF WORK AND PERFORMANCE TIMELINE

SOI is seeking a consultant starting October 6, 2025 – July 31, 2026. Specific responsibilities and activities of this contract include:

Deliverable 1: Project Coordination and Tool Development (estimated due date: December 31, 2025)

- Meet weekly with research and evaluation and fitness teams to coordinate fitness data collection projects.
- Assist the team in the initiation of at least two fitness evaluations (e.g., Fitness Through Sport, Inclusive Fitness, USA Games Fitness Challenge), including working with participating US Programs, delivering training on evaluation plans, and providing technical assistance during project initiation.
- Contribute to the drafting or revision of at least two fitness evaluation tools for inclusion on the SOI Fitness Evaluation Resource Page.
- Collaborate with the team to develop an internal summary brief highlighting early progress, lessons learned, and recommendations from feasibility evaluations.

Deliverable 2: Evaluation Implementation and Data Analysis (estimated due date: April 30, 2026)

- Meet weekly with research and evaluation and fitness teams to coordinate fitness data collection projects.
- Assist with the implementation of at least two ongoing fitness evaluations, including continued coordination with US Programs, organizing and managing collected data, overseeing data collection logistics, and conducting initial analyses.
- Support the finalization of at least one fitness evaluation tool/resource for posting on the SOI Fitness Evaluation Resource Page.
- Contribute to the development of at least one manuscript and one conference abstract related to fitness program evaluations.

Deliverable 3: USA Games Fitness Evaluation and Final Dissemination (estimated due date: July 31, 2026)

- Meet weekly with research and evaluation and fitness teams to coordinate fitness data collection projects.
- Assist with the completion of at least two fitness evaluation projects, including analyzing and summarizing findings from the 2026 USA Games fitness activities.
- Support the preparation of internal reports and disseminate results and recommendations to US Programs.
- Collaborate with the team to co-author at least one manuscript or formal report summarizing fitness evaluation outcomes.

TERMS OF CONTRACT

The Fitness Evaluation Consultant will receive up to \$50,000 in compensation for this work. This includes \$5,000 upon signing, \$15,000 for Deliverable 1, \$15,000 for Deliverable 2, and \$15,000 for Deliverable 3.

Sources of Funding and Compliance Requirements please note that this assignment will be partially funded by the USA Federal Agency Center for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) under the Department



of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Therefore, you will need to comply with all applicable federal laws and regulations including OMB 2 CFR Chapter I, Chapter II, Part 200, et al. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards; Final Rule. <http://www.ecfr.gov/>)

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Required Qualifications

- Master's or doctoral degree (PhD, DrPH, EdD), or current enrollment in a graduate program in adapted physical activity, kinesiology, public health, epidemiology, or a related field.
- Strong written communication skills, with experience summarizing research findings for diverse audiences.
- Excellent attention to detail, time management, and organizational skills.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively in a remote team environment.
- Ability to thrive in a fast-paced environment, manage multiple priorities, and contribute to long-term projects.
- Record of academic publications or technical reports.

Desired Qualifications

- Prior experience or demonstrated interest in working with individuals with ID.
- Familiarity with Special Olympics mission and Programs.
- Experience with quantitative and/or qualitative data analysis software.

INSTRUCTIONS

Key Dates

Applications should be submitted within the following schedule. All dates are subject to change.

RFP Released	August 11, 2025
Application Submission Due	September 12, 2025, 11:59pm EST
Notification of Selected Consultant(s)	September 19, 2025
Contract Initiation and Implementation Start	October 6, 2025

Applications

Applications shall be submitted in PDF format and sent using electronic mail.

Applications should be submitted:

- ☐ by the 11:59pm EST on September 12, 2025
- ☐ with "Application: Fitness Evaluation Consultant" in the subject line
- ☐ in one attachment including: 1) Cover letter, 2) Curriculum Vita (CV)/Resume, and 3) References (3)
- ☐ to Alicia Dixon-Ibarra at: adixonibarra@specialolympics.org
- ☐ Receipt will be acknowledged via email.

Consultants should organize their application as defined below to ensure consistency and to facilitate the evaluation of all responses. All the sections listed below must be included in the application and submitted in the following format:

- Section 1 – Cover letter



- Section 2 – CV/Resume
- Section 3 – References

Section 1: Cover Letter

Provide a concise, well-structured summary of your qualifications and experiences, and explain why you are interested in and suited for the position. Address how your skills and background align with the job description. Please include the total number of hours you would be able to contribute weekly to complete the deliverables.

Section 2: Curriculum Vita (CV)/Resume

Your CV/Resume is a vital component of your application as it provides an organized overview of your professional and educational history. Ensure that it includes a comprehensive account of your work experience, educational achievements, skills, and relevant accomplishments. A well-prepared CV/Resume is crucial for our assessment of your qualifications and suitability for the position.

Section 3: References

Provide the contact information of (3) individuals who can serve as references on your behalf. References should be individuals who are familiar with your character, qualifications, and work history. This may include former employers, professors, or colleagues. Please include their names, titles, contact information, and a brief description of your relationship with them.

SOI CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions

Alicia Dixon-Ibarra, PhD, MPH | Director, Fitness and Health Research

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Special Olympics is not obligated to any course of action as the result of this RFP. Issuance of this RFP does not constitute a commitment by Special Olympics to award any contract. Special Olympics is not responsible for any costs incurred by any consultant or their partners in the RFP response preparation or presentation. Information submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of Special Olympics. All responses will be kept private from other consultants. Special Olympics reserves the right to modify this RFP at any time and reserves the right to reject any responses to this RFP, in whole or in part, at any time.