The Impetus
Competition for the Signature and Emerging Research and Educational Areas at the University of Maine

How are these areas defined?
Areas which, “capitalize on an interdisciplinary collaboration; have a track record of success with external support from a variety of sources; and have the integration of the research, teaching and service mission.”

Leadership
The University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies took a leadership role in one research area and one educational area:

Health and Well-being Across the Lifespan (HWL)
Aging Research and Innovation

The Theory: Engagement
• Collaborative teamwork
• Ambitious projects that are meaningful to someone outside of the academic setting
• Emphasis on human rights through innovation, education and inquiry

The UCEDD Structure as a Model
• The University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies (ME UCEDD) structure is interdisciplinary and community connected;
• Our functions: interdisciplinary education, research and evaluation, community engagement and dissemination;
• Fields of study: interdisciplinary disability studies, humanities, engineering, art and design, technology, human performance, human development and family studies, social and basic sciences, and marketing and branding; and
• Undergraduate and graduate student preparation: innovative careers in diverse scholarly and applied fields devoted to social change focused on disability.

The Process: Collaborative and Inclusive
• Concept Papers were invited; accepted proposals were grouped into common areas to be further developed and expanded into interdisciplinary initiatives.
• Interdisciplinary faculty were convened to read, discuss and glean commonalities from concept papers.
• Literature and innovative curricula across the globe were reviewed.
• An expansive, innovative framework was developed and a paper drafted.
• Criticism and commentary from collaborators served as the basis for revision and refinement before submitting the work to the University of Maine administration.

Health and Well-being Across the Lifespan (HWL)
• Integration in higher education that is contemporary and transcends individual disciplines and professions
• Cross-cutting HWL Areas
  - Embodied health and well-being
  - Career health and well-being
  - Social health and well-being
  - Financial health and well-being
  - Community health and well-being

Aging Research and Innovation
• Integrative innovation that spans the boundaries of traditional disciplines and professions
• Maximizes individual productivity;
• Minimizes institutionalization;
• Prevents and mitigates the impact of illness and injury; and
• Promotes community inclusion, social engagement, full accessibility, personal independence, vitality, mobility, disability and elder friendly communities, and citizen safety.