FUNDED

CYBERSECURITY FUNDING

In the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

Making the Case for
Broadband Need

Budget Analysis 2022:
The Future of Public Safety Funding

Grant Funding for
Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Infrastructure

What's Next for
Healthcare and Public Health Funding?

2022 Budget Analysis:
K12 through Higher Education

Funding Innovation
in the K-12 Classroom

Esports:
Funding Opportunities and Challenges

PLUS! SUMMARY INFO OF EXCITING
GRANT OPPORTUNITIES!

The Nation's Leader in Grants Intelligence
WWW.GRANTSOFFICE.COM

ON THE COVER
Cybersecurity Funding in the
Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

04

10

14

22

IN THIS ISSUE

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

DEAR READERS,

Some of the murkier details on funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) are beginning to become clear, and we have captured highlights of the new funding information for you across local government, education, and healthcare, in this issue of FUNDED.

To start us off, Richard Campo takes us through the latest developments in IIJA funding for **cybersecurity**. Cybersecurity needs have historically been underfunded, in favor of more tangible – and perhaps understandable and visible – forms of security. But the threat of cyberattacks has only grown in recent years, and the public has become more acutely aware than ever that a single event can be disastrous.

Building on his coverage of **broadband** funding from our last issue, Chris Barnes discusses strategies for articulating a case – to a grant funder or to a community of stakeholders – that establishes a community's need for expanded broadband services.

For our **public safety** readers, Shannon Day provides has produced an analysis of this year's federal budget across a broad swath of public safety grant programs and initiatives, with funding to inspire anyone in public safety leadership to start planning around. And speaking of planning for the future, Amanda Day provides highlights of funding to build the nation's **electric vehicle charging infrastructure**.

In **healthcare**, Lynette Cale reveals some highlights of what's around the corner in 2023 and beyond, including for the ever in-demand area of healthcare workforce development programs.

In the areas of **K-12 and higher education**, Sydney Stapleton takes us through the funding that will be provided at all levels of education by the FY22 federal budget, including specific amounts that will be available and some programs you may not have heard about in the news. And in more granular detail, Patrick Riedy and Liz Shay provide insights, best practices, and challenges in funding **educational innovation** and **esports** respectively – two of the most popular project types we see in the educational programs we support here at Grants Office.

Be sure to check out the other timely and informative *Grantscasts* our team will be presenting on or review the replays of past events on topics you find interesting. As always, if you have comments, feedback, corrections, or topics for future issues, feel free to drop me a line at: mpaddock@grantsoffice.com.

I hope you enjoy this issue of FUNDED as much as we have enjoyed bringing it to you!

Sincerely,
Michael Paddock
Editor and Publisher,
FUNDED

CYBERSECURITY FUNDING IN THE INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT

By: Richard Campo, Grants Development Consultant (State and Local Government)

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) became law in November 2021 and includes several new funding opportunities for states, territories, local governments, and tribes to improve their cybersecurity. These programs include the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program, the Rural and Municipal Utility Advanced Cybersecurity Grant and Technical Assistance Program, and the Cyber Response and Recovery Fund. The State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program is the flagship cybersecurity grant in the IIJA and the first federal grant program dedicated exclusively to cybersecurity. In contrast, the Rural and Municipal Utility Advanced Cybersecurity program is smaller, and applicants must use the funds to improve the cybersecurity of rural and municipal electric utilities. Lastly, the Cyber Response and Recovery Fund is not a traditional grant. The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) will distribute these funds to state and local governments who need assistance to respond to and recover from a cyber-attack. Details of these programs are available below.

First, the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program will provide $1 billion over five years. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), coordinating with CISA, will administer the program to states, territories, and tribes, each of which must create cybersecurity planning committees to decide how they will spend the funds. These cybersecurity planning committees must include representatives from state government, local government, and institutions of public education and health. FEMA will distribute these funds by formula. Territories will each receive 0.25 percent of funds, tribes will receive a total of three percent of funds, and states will receive a baseline of one percent each. Of the remaining funds, 50 percent will flow to states by total population, and the other 50 percent will flow according to states' rural populations. Additionally, 25 percent of funds must go to projects serving rural areas. In FY 2022, $200 million will be available across the country, and applicants must provide 10 percent of funds for their projects to satisfy the cost sharing requirement. A local government must apply to their state for funding, and a local project should align with the state's cybersecurity plan. FEMA and CISA expect to release more information about this program in the third quarter of 2022.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act provides an unprecedented amount of cybersecurity funding for state and local governments.

Cybersecurity planning committees in states, territories, and tribes must explain how they will address 16 cybersecurity elements. These elements include:

- How the applicant will manage, monitor, and track information systems, applications, and user accounts they own or operate.

- How the applicant will monitor, audit, and track network activity traveling to and from information systems, applications, and user accounts.

- How the applicant will enhance the preparation, response, and resiliency of information systems, applications, and user accounts against cybersecurity threats.

- How the applicant will implement continuous vulnerability assessments and threat mitigation to address cybersecurity threats to information systems, applications, and user accounts.

Next, the Rural and Municipal Utility Advanced Cybersecurity Grant and Technical Assistance program will provide $250 million over five years. This program's objectives are to deploy advanced cybersecurity technologies for electric utility systems and to increase electric utilities' participation in threat information sharing programs. The Department of Energy (DOE) will administer this program, and eligible applicants include rural electric cooperatives (co-ops), municipal electric utilities, other publicly owned electric utilities, and investor-owned electric utilities that sell fewer than 4,000,000 megawatt hours (MWh) of electricity annually. The DOE will prioritize applicants with limited cybersecurity resources, applicants that own assets critical to the reliability of the bulk power system, and applicants that own defense critical infrastructure. We expect the Department of Energy will release more information about this program by the end of the calendar year.

Lastly, the Cyber Response and Recovery Fund will provide $100 million over five years. CISA will distribute the funds to federal, state, local, and tribal agencies to respond to and recover from cyber-attacks after the Department of Homeland Security makes an emergency declaration following a significant cyber incident. Recipients may use these funds for hardware or software to improve existing hardware, software, and systems, and recipients may also use funds for technical contract personnel support. Additionally, CISA can provide affected agencies with technical assistance such as vulnerability assessments and mitigation, malware analysis, threat detection, and network protections. We expect CISA will release more information about this program by the end of FY 2022.

Overall, the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant program will be the best fit for most cybersecurity projects. However, the Rural and Municipal Utility Advanced Cybersecurity program is perfect for electric utilities providers looking to improve their cybersecurity, and the Cyber Response and Recovery Fund will benefit agencies that have already experienced a cyber-attack and need assistance to recover. The federal government has released IIJA funding more slowly than the stimulus funding in response to COVID-19, but more funding opportunities continue to trickle in. Sign up for email updates from Grants.gov and federal agencies like FEMA and CISA to stay up to date, and remember, it is never too early to start preparing for an application.

Subscribe to email updates from Grants.gov and federal grantmakers to keep apprised of new information as it releases.

STATE AND LOCAL CYBERSECURITY GRANT PROGRAM

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

The Department of Homeland Security will administer a program to award grants to eligible entities to address cybersecurity risks and cybersecurity threats to information systems owned or operated by, or on behalf of, State, local, or Tribal governments.

An eligible entity that receives a grant under this program and a local government that receives funds from a grant under this program must use the grant to:

- implement the Cybersecurity Plan of the eligible entity
- develop or revise the Cybersecurity Plan of the eligible entity
- pay expenses directly relating to the administration of the grant, which shall not exceed 5 percent of the amount of the grant;
- assist with activities that address imminent cybersecurity threats, as confirmed by the Secretary of Homeland Security, acting through the National Cyber Director, to the information systems owned or operated by, or on behalf of, the eligible entity or a local government within the jurisdiction of the eligible entity;
- fund any other appropriate activity determined by the Secretary of Homeland Security, acting through the National Cyber Director.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible entities include States and Tribal governments. States must pass down at least 80 percent of the funds they receive to local governments within their jurisdictions. 25 percent of funds must go to projects in rural areas.

DEADLINE

This program is expected to open in the third quarter of 2022 (July, August, or September).

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://www.hassan.senate.gov/news/press-releases/hassan-led-state-and-local-cybersecurity-grant-program-passes-senate

MAKING THE CASE FOR BROADBAND NEED

By: Chris Barnes, Senior Grants Development Consultant (State and Local Government)

Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, governments, schools, healthcare providers, and other organizations have rightly focused on addressing the digital divide in communities across the country. While the Federal Communications Commission estimates that approximately 21.3 million Americans do not have broadband internet access, other groups estimate that the actual number might be closer to 42 million. To assist those impacted by a lack of broadband access, all three major COVID stimulus bills have directed at least some funds to broadband infrastructure investments. Out of the $65 billion in new broadband funding in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), nearly $48 billion will be administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to support projects ranging from broadband infrastructure installation to digital equity initiatives.

The highest priority for much of this new funding is to bridge the digital divide in communities that lack broadband internet or do not have service that exceeds 25 megabytes downstream/3 megabytes upstream. The second highest priority is to enhance connectivity for communities that lack speeds of at least 100 megabytes downstream/20 megabytes upstream. With so many communities hoping to utilize this IIJA funding, your grant proposal will need to make a clear, strong justification for why your organization and community need these funds the most.

COLLECT THE DATA

Any competitive broadband proposal needs to explain what connectivity challenges you're trying to solve. The type of information you may need to collect will vary based on your proposed project.

For example, if your community needs sufficient infrastructure to increase broadband speeds, you should collect data on available speeds. One available tool is the NTIA's Indicators of Broadband Need Map. This map combines datasets from a variety of sources, including census data, Ookla speed tests, and FCC Form 477 information in an attempt to provide a holistic overview of broadband speeds within a census tract. Users enter a location, and the map shows them the median speed in this community and contrasts it with advertised provider speeds. This data can provide applicants with a first look at the types of speed needs faced by their community.

The NTIA is also looking for other types of data to help illustrate needs. Your local government can hold town halls or conduct surveys to learn more about the digital challenges residents and communities experience. This kind of alternative information can help show some of the unique circumstances in your community.

WORK WITH YOUR STATE BROADBAND OFFICE

The bulk of this new broadband grant funding will be allocated to states on a formula basis. States will receive formula funds for the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program and State Digital Equity grants. BEAD supports broadband infrastructure investments in communities without reliable access to high-speed internet, while State Digital Equity funds are designed to promote digital inclusion activities in a community.

One of the requirements for the new funding directed to states is that they must designate an administrative body to oversee these funds. If they haven't already, states are forming state broadband offices to manage these funds and the projects they'll pursue. State broadband offices are required to work with local governments and other community organizations to determine the highest areas of need and kind of projects they'll implement. These offices will need to indicate to the NTIA that they're engaging with relevant local stakeholders as they develop their broadband plans.

Working with your state's broadband office will be necessary for much of this broadband funding. Reach out early to discuss your community's connectivity needs. The state office can also provide technical support and help with mapping your community's broadband needs to identify areas of highest need.

If you're unsure as to how to reach your state's broadband office, the NTIA has a list of state broadband offices with contact information.

ESTABLISH YOUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

While working with your state broadband office is key to establish your broadband need, you will also need to engage with other local stakeholders in your community. The list of possible partners is broad and will depend on your location:

- Local governments
- Local service providers
- Local utility providers
- Local businesses
- Community anchor institutions
- Community leaders and activists

Community partners can shed light on connectivity issues in your community and speak about the different populations who are most impacted. Bringing them, and your state broadband office, into the planning process early will bolster your case for broadband funding.

The NTIA will begin to release guidance for how states need to prepare broadband plans in May 2022 but you don't need to wait until the NTIA releases guidance to begin the process, especially if you are interested in pursuing some of these alternative grant programs. Begin having these conversations at the local and state level now and begin collecting the necessary information about the broadband needs in your community. Taking these steps early on will ensure that you are well-prepared to pursue much of the new funding we'll see in coming years.

COMMUNITY CONNECT
GRANT PROGRAM

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

The Community Connect Grant Program (Community Connect Program) is designed to provide financial assistance to provide service at the Broadband Grant Speed in rural, economically challenged communities where broadband service does not currently exist. Grant funds may be used to: (1) deploy service at the Broadband Grant Speed to essential community facilities, rural residents, and rural businesses, (2) construct, acquire, or expand a community center, and (3) equip a community center that provides free access to service at the Broadband Grant Speed to community residents for at least two years. Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis for entities to serve all premises in eligible rural areas at the Broadband Grant Speed to ensure rural consumers enjoy the same quality and range of broadband services as are available in urban and suburban communities.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants include:

- Incorporated organizations
- Federally recognized Tribes
- State and local units of government
- Any other legal entity, including cooperatives, private corporations, or limited liability companies organized on a for-profit or not-for-profit basis

DEADLINE

Applications were to be submitted by December 23, 2020. The next application window is expected of open late Fall 2022.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/community-connect-grants

2022 BUDGET ANALYSIS:
THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC SAFETY FUNDING

By: Shannon M. Day, Grants Development Consultant (Public Safety)

While the COVID-19 pandemic shut much of the country down, the criminal justice system kept operating. Across the country, from rural communities to large metro areas, the opioid epidemic worsened, violent crime increased, domestic terrorism and cyber threats grew, and spotlights were thrown on how communities are policed and how first responders are trained.

We see attempts to address some of these issues when looking at this year's federal budget. The Department of Justice (DOJ) is the primary federal grantmaker for criminal justice initiatives. The DOJ offers funding to support and train criminal justice agencies in state, local, and tribal jurisdictions, assist victims of crime, conduct research, and implement innovative programs to improve the criminal, civil, and juvenile justice systems.

The Department of Justice realized a 17.3% increase in its total budget compared to 2021 funding levels. Most of the DOJ's grant programs also received an increase in funding, most notably the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program, which received an increase of 39.4%, for a total of $674.5 million, and the Rural Violent Crime Initiative, which received a 14.3% increase.

Several new programs were created to help address hate crimes and civil rights. These include the Hate Crimes Prevention Act Grants, Community-based Approaches to Advancing Justice, and the Jabara-Heyer NO HATE Act. The latter two programs received $5 million each to help community-based organizations address hate crimes, provide support for victims in their communities, and help identify, investigate, and report hate crimes.

The Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) saw a total allocation of $575 million in 2022. Grants to Reduce Violent Crimes Against Women on Campus received a 10% increase in funding to $22 million, with half of the funding allocated for HBCUs, Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), and tribal colleges from this year moving forward.

The Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program saw an increase in its budget, reflecting a greater focus on community policing initiatives as a national priority. Funding for Community Policing Development Activities increased from $35 million in 2021 to $40 million in 2022.

Juvenile Justice Programs (OJJDP) received a total of $360 million, increasing funding for most programs and creating several new programs. One example is the Protecting Vulnerable and At-Risk Youth initiative. This funding will support establishing a pilot program serving adolescents and youth who have experienced a history of foster care involvement, child poverty, child abuse or neglect, human trafficking, juvenile justice involvement, substance abuse disorder, or gang involvement.

Regarding the focus on restorative justice and alternatives to incarceration are Second Chance Act and reentry initiatives. A newly formed Crisis Stabilization and Community Reentry program received $10 million to address the mental health and substance use disorder needs of individuals recently released from correctional facilities.

Some funding was rerouted from the National Institute of Justice's (NIJ) Research, Evaluation, and Statistics Programs to several new Training and Technical Assistance grants for research institutions and larger criminal justice agencies. Programs include the Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains initiative, a research center to combat opioid abuse, ballistics programs, and creating an office of law enforcement standards.

The other primary funder for public safety, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), realized a 9.8% increase from fiscal year 2021 appropriations. The two programs that received the most significant boosts from the previous year are the Urban Area Security Initiative (nearly 5% increase) and the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP), with a 39% increase in total funding. Within the Homeland Security Grant Program umbrella, UASI funding helps 31 designated Urban Areas prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from threats or acts of terrorism, both foreign and domestic, including cyber threats. The NSGP, under the same umbrella, helps nonprofit organizations under the potential threat of terrorist attack enhance the protection of their facilities and the people within through physical security enhancements and planning and training initiatives.

A NOTE ON FUNDING FOR FIRE, EMS, AND 911
Funding for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grants (SAFER), and the Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG) remains unchanged from 2021, at $360 and $355 million, respectively.

Unfortunately, the requested funding for the 911 State Grant Program renewal did not make it into the final budget package, but 911 centers, PSAPs, and EMAs can still utilize alternative resources through federal, state, and foundation funders.

The preceding is a very brief summary of a very long federal budget. You can read a more robust overview of the Fiscal Year 2022 budget published by the White House here and find more information on the Department of Justice Grant Program Plan for Fiscal Year 2022 here.

TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES PROGRAM (TCUP)

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

The Tribal Colleges and Universities Program (TCUP) provides awards to federally recognized Tribal Colleges and Universities, Alaska Native-serving institutions, and Native Hawaiian-serving institutions to promote high quality science (including sociology, psychology, anthropology, linguistics, economics and bio economics, statistics, and other social and behavioral sciences; natural sciences; computer science, including, but not limited to, artificial intelligence, quantum information science, and cybersecurity), technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), STEM education, research, and outreach.

TCUP supports transformative capacity-building, community engagement, or research projects at TCUP-eligible institutions through the following funding tracks:

- Instructional Capacity Excellence in TCUP Institutions (ICE-TI)
- Targeted STEM Infusion Projects (TSIP)
- TCUP for Secondary & Elementary Teachers in STEM (TSETS)
- TCU Enterprise Advancement Centers (TEA Centers)
- The Cyberinfrastructure Health, Assistance, and Improvements (CHAI)
- Preparing for TCUP Implementation (Pre-TI)
- The TCUP Partnerships
- Small Grants for Research (SGR)

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants include:

- Tribal Colleges and Universities
- Alaska Native-serving institutions and Native Hawaiian-serving institutions

DEADLINE

Deadlines occur annually and vary by program area throughout the year.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://beta.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/tribal-colleges-and-universities-program-tcup

TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES PROGRAM (TCUP)

FUNDED PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

FUNDED ORGANIZATION
Northwest Indian College Foundation

PROJECT TITLE
Restoring the Salish Sea: Food Sovereignty and Clean Water in the Pacific Northwest

AMOUNT FUNDED
$4,199,999

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
This project titled "Restoring the Salish Sea: Food Sovereignty and Clean Water in the Pacific Northwest" aligns directly with that goal through the establishment of the Tribal Enterprise Advancement Center for Community Marine Research at Northwest Indian College. The center is affiliated with the existing Salish Sea Research Center, housed at the college, and partners with the Lummi Natural Resources Department (LNR) of the Lummi Nation. The focus of the center's work is research and educational outreach regarding marine matters of the waters of the Salish Sea off the Pacific northwest coast of the United States. Knowledge gained through this work contributes to our understanding of the marine ecosystem and is used by the LNR in managing their aquatic resources to protect water quality and to ensure a safe and sustainable shellfish harvest.

The Tribal Enterprise Advancement Center for Community Marine Research will pursue its intent through pursuit of two goals: focus on community-identified research projects using molecular and analytic approaches that increase current capacity of water quality monitoring and the safety and sustainability of seafood; and provide analysis of biotoxins in seafood and Salish Sea waters for Lummi Nation and Northwest Indian College.

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION
https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward?AWD_ID=1840199&HistoricalAwards=false

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE
https://foundation.nwic.edu/

GRANT FUNDING FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE

By: Amanda Day, Grants Development Associate (State & Local Government)

The federal government has set a goal that half of all new vehicles sold in the U.S. must be zero-emissions by the year 2030 and with rising fuel prices, consumer interest in electric vehicles continues to rise. With more of these vehicles on the road, there is an increased need for Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) contains $5 billion in funding, spread out over the next five years, for the new National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Program (NEVI). The purpose of this funding is to create a national network of convenient, affordable, and reliable electric vehicle (EV) charging stations for public use, with the overall goal being to install over 500,000 electric vehicle charging stations across the U.S. by the year 2030.

The IIJA will supply a total of $615 million in funding for Fiscal Year 2022, to be distributed through the Department of Transportation (DOT). Funds have been allocated individually by state and will not be distributed until the state has submitted an Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Deployment Plan to the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation. In addition to these funds, $300 million will be available to aid in installing chargers specifically in rural and under-served areas. These qualifying rural areas consist of 20 percent of America's total population and almost 70 percent of America's total road miles. The use of electric vehicles in these communities will help rural residents reduce transportation costs and minimize the overall environmental impact of travel.

The states with the highest amount of allocated funding are Texas ($60 million), California ($56 million), New York ($26 million) and Pennsylvania ($25 million). A list of individual state awards can be viewed here. To qualify for federal NEVI funds, states must submit a plan to the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) describing how it intends to use NEVI Formula funds throughout the five years. States must also report to the DOT how these plans will aid in developing a national network of EV charging infrastructure.

The Department of Transportation has released a robust report clarifying what additional federal grant funds are available to use for electric vehicle charging stations and infrastructure. As you can see, some existing broader grant programs, such as Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE), Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) and Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment (ATCMTD), also include charging station infrastructure as an eligible cost.

Current electric vehicle owners typically charge their vehicles at home or work, limiting their overall travel ability. The installation of affordable and convenient public charging stations, insuring they will be able to recharge their electric vehicles whenever and wherever they need

DOT Funding and Financing Programs with EV Eligibilities*

	FY 2022[1] AMOUNT	Charging infrastructure	Workforce	EV acquisitions	Planning	Freight charging	Transit
FORMULA PROGRAMS							
National Highway Performance Program (NHPP)	$28.4 B[2]	✓	✓				✓
Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)	$12.5 B[2,3]	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)	$2.5 B[2]	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
National Highway Freight Program (NHFP)	$1.4 B[2]			✓	✓	✓	
State Planning and Research (SPR)	$983.3 M[4]				✓		
Metropolitan Planning (PL)	$438.1 M[2]				✓		
Carbon Reduction Program	$1.2 B[2,5]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
National Electric Vehicle (NEVI) Formula Program	$685 M[2,5,6]	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
DISCRETIONARY PROGRAMS							
Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) (formerly known as BUILD)	$1.5 B	✓			✓	✓	✓
Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grant Program	$1.64 B[2,7]	✓			✓	✓	
Advanced Transportation and Technologies and Innovative Mobility Deployment	$60 M[2]	✓					✓
Discretionary Grant Program for Charging and Fueling Infrastructure	$300 M[2,5]	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program	$300 M[2,5]	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Reduction of Truck Emissions at Port Facilities Program	$80 M[2,5,7]	✓		✓		✓	
OTHER ALLOCATED PROGRAMS							
Federal Lands and Tribal Transportation Program (FLTTP)	$1.3 B[2,8]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Puerto Rico Highway Program (PRHP)	$173 M[2]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Territorial Highway Program (THP)	$46 M[2]	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
INNOVATIVE FINANCE PROGRAMS							
State Infrastructure Banks (SIBs)	Varies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Transportation Infrastructure Financing and Innovation Act (TIFIA)	$250 M[2]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

LEGEND

Construction and installation of EV charging infrastructure including parking facilities and utilities.	Workforce development and training related to EV infrastructure.	EV acquisitions and engine conversions - cars or trucks.	Planning for EV charging infrastructure and related projects.	Construction and installation of EV charging infrastructure to support operational, resiliency, national energy security, environmental, and community goals for freight transportation.	Installation of EV charging infrastructure as part of transit capital projects eligible under chapter 53 of title 49, United States Code.

Figure 1 Photo courtesy of the U.S. Department of Transportation website.

to, just as they can in a gas-powered vehicle, will greater bolster the purchasing confidence of the American people. Available grant funding from IIJA and other programs, will remove those limits and lead to an overall national transition to electric vehicles.

NATIONAL ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE (NEVI) FORMULA PROGRAM

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

The National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program was created to provide funding to states to strategically deploy electric vehicle charging infrastructure and to establish an interconnected network to facilitate data collection, access, and reliability. The purpose of these historic investments in electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure will put the United States on a path to a nationwide network of 500,000 EV chargers by 2030 and ensure a convenient, reliable, affordable, and equitable charging experience for all users.

The Subject to the minimum standards and requirements established by the Secretary of Transportation, in coordination with the Secretary of Energy and in consultation with relevant stakeholders, the funds resulting from this apportionment are eligible to be obligated for:

- the acquisition or installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure;
- operating assistance for costs allocable to operating and maintaining electric vehicle charging infrastructure acquired or installed under this program, for a period not to exceed 5 years;
- the acquisition or installation of traffic control devices located in the right-of-way to provide directional information to electric vehicle charging infrastructure acquired, installed, or operated under this program;
- on-premises signs to provide information about electric vehicle charging infrastructure acquired, installed, or operated under this program;
- development phase activities relating to the acquisition or installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, as determined by the Secretary; or
- mapping and analysis activities to evaluate, in an area in the United States designated by the eligible entity, the locations of current and future electric vehicle owners.

ELIGIBILITY

States will receive formula funds from the Department of Transportation, but no NEVI Formula Program funds shall be obligated by a State until FHWA has approved.

DEADLINE

States should submit final plans not later than August 1, 2022. FHWA will notify each State if their Plan is approved for implementation and obligation not later than September 30, 2022.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/legsregs/directives/notices/n4510863.cfm

WHAT'S NEXT FOR HEALTHCARE AND PUBLIC HEALTH FUNDING?

By: Lynnette Cale, Grants Development Consultant (Healthcare)

In March 2022, after six months and two funding continuation bills, the FY22 Federal Budget was approved. This much anticipated budget, after two years of CARES, Covid-Relief, and ARP stimulus funding during the pandemic, has a lot to offer in terms of healthcare and public health.

For FY22, The Department of Health and Human Services continues to prioritize medical research, opioid abuse/substance-use prevention and treatment programs, and mental health. HHS saw increases in funding to combat opioid abuse ($299 million increase) and support substance-use prevention and treatment programs. Mental health research, treatment, and prevention also saw a $394.3 million increase. The National Institute of Health (NIH) received $1 billion for the newly established Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H). NIH also saw a $2.25 billion increase for medical research for Alzheimer's, cancer, and ALS. HHS Preparedness saw a $148.3 million increase for research, development, SNS, and preparedness. HHS will also receive $15 billion in emergency (COVID supplemental) funding for therapeutics and research for emerging coronavirus variants ($10.6 billion) while $5 billion will go to USAID to accelerate international vaccination efforts and humanitarian aid. COVID supplemental funding will come from the rescission of previously appropriated, unobligated, and unexpended ARP, CARES, and PPP funds and funding increases were denied for Title X-Family planning and Teen Pregnancy Prevention.

President Biden presented his proposed FY23 budget in March 2022. The FY23 federal budget will still need to go through Congress and will most likely look very different from the President's budget, but it does help give insight into the President's priority areas over the next year and beyond. The President's FY23 Budget for HHS again focuses on mental healthcare and suicide prevention, healthcare access and outcomes for vulnerable populations, health research and innovation, public health systems, emergency and pandemic preparedness, HIV/AIDs, domestic violence, access to childcare and early learning, and social service equity. President Biden's proposed budget for FY23 includes $127.3 billion in discretionary funding, which is a $26.9 billion (or 26.8% increase) over the 2021 enacted level, not including the Indian Health Services (IHS). This budget shifts IHS funding from discretionary to mandatory funding and includes appropriations for 21st Century Cures Act and program integrity activities.

Healthcare and Public Health spending in HHS Provider Relief Funds and ARP Rural Provider Relief Funds will currently continue through 2023, as funds continue to be distributed through mid-year 2022. Other COVID and ARP stimulus funds for healthcare and public health-related programs will have already reached their spending deadlines or will be ending later this year.

As healthcare and public health organizations begin to recover from the pandemic and focus on current and emerging needs, the FY22 approved budget and President's FY23 proposed budget help direct projects towards areas of available funding and help direct organizations to gaps in funding and areas in need of legislative education and lobbying. The pandemic may be becoming endemic, but there is still work to be done in healthcare and public health. It is important to have a relationship with your state and federal representatives. Update them regularly on your successes and barriers and share the gaps and needs you are seeing in funding. Your voice and experiences in the field, help shape the funding priorities for the future.

2022 BUDGET ANALYSIS: K12 THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION

By: Sydney Stapleton, Grants Development Consultant (Higher Education)

With the passing of the Fiscal Year 2022 budget, the **US Department of Education** was allocated approximately $76.4 billion: an increase of $2.9 billion from FY21. President Biden's administration requested the creation of new education programs, however Congress opted to mostly continue to support already established programs with similar funding from last fiscal year or slightly increase established programs allocations. The final budget does include. Throughout the budget, there is an emphasis on workforce development, aligned with the Biden-Harris administration's "Good Jobs" initiative, seeking to improve job quality and create access to workforce development opportunities. There is also emphasis on supporting educational programing and research that looks to improve education and life for individuals from underrepresent backgrounds.

K-12 US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

In the K-12 space there was an additional $30 million in support for the K-12 focused 21st Century Community Learning Centers. The 21st CCLC program supports the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for children. This program puts the focus on students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. The 21st CCLC helps students meet state and local student standards in core academic subjects, offers students a broad array of enrichment activities that can complement their regular academic programs; and provides other educational services to the families of participating children.

Additionally, the Education Innovation and Research Program saw a $40 million increase to support innovation to create, develop, implement, and replicate evidence-based innovations to improve student achievement and attainment for high-need students.

HIGHER EDUCATION US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

In FY22 there was a $45 million increase in support for the K-12 and Higher Ed relevant Career Technical Education (CTE) State Grants. State education agencies have the final decision on if those CTE funds will go toward K-12, Higher Education, or a combination of both.

An additional $96 million was allocated to support programs aimed at strengthening HBCU/MSI colleges and Universities, most likely via the existing HEA Title III and V funding pathways.

While the FY22 budget mostly increased funding for already established programs, there are several new funding pathways available for higher education projects under the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education program (FIPSE). While FIPSE does not hold competitions every year, it appears there will be several opportunities this coming fiscal year. The "Open Textbooks Pilot Grant" program will return with a total of $11 million in new awards. The Open Textbooks Pilot program supports projects at eligible institutions of higher education to create new open textbooks and expand the use of open textbooks in courses that are part of a degree-granting program, particularly those with high enrollments. Along with the Open Textbooks program there will be Postsecondary Student Success Grants with $5 million available and Center of Excellence in Spatial Computing with $2 million available.

Throughout the FY22 budget, congress emphasized that funds should be used to make competitive grants to Institutions of Higher Education and other public or private organizations proposing innovative approaches to enroll and retain rural students in postsecondary education for high skill/wage/demand career pathways.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT IN OPPORTUNITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

With an emphasis across the budget on getting people employed, the Department of Labor was funded at or above 2021 funding levels. The Workforce Investment Act Programs received a 6.8% increase over its 2021 funding. Aligning with the "Good Jobs" initiative, the Strengthening Community College Training Grants program received a $5 million increase. This program supports activities that develop or improve educational and career training programs at community colleges. Proposed projects focus on collaborations with employers and the public workforce development system with an aim of meeting local and regional labor market demands for a skilled workforce. Regional workforce commissions also saw an increase in funding over 2021 levels. The Appalachian, Delta, and Northern Border Regional Commissions collectively will receive a total of $45 million in 2022.

HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

For larger institutions of higher education, research activities are another way they receive funding through the fiscal year budget. One major source is the National Science Foundation (NSF). For FY22 the NSF had a 4.1% increase in their total budget when compared to FY21. Of that 3.6% was specifically for research and related activities, resulting in a total allocation of $7.16 billion.

The NSF's Directorate for Education and Human Resources budget was increased by 3.9%, which includes both STEM programming and education-oriented grants. The Tribal Colleges and Universities Program (TCUP) had a 6.1% increase in funding and the Historically Black Colleges & Universities Undergraduate Program (HBCU-UP) had a 4.1% increase, showing the NSFs commitment to diversify the science field.

Along with the NSF, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and National Institute of Health (NIH) are some of the biggest funders of research in the higher education space. They both continue to prioritize medical research, opioid abuse/substance-use prevention and treatment and mental health in this year's budget. There is a $349.3 million increase in funding to support mental health research, treatment, and prevention. The NIH received $1 billion for the newly established Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H). This agency hopes to improve the U.S. government's ability to speed biomedical and health research. ARPA-H will strengthen "transformative high-risk, high-reward research to drive biomedical and health breakthroughs" working to improve the lives of patients across the country.

The FY2022 budget saw an increase in education spending, particular around getting students into the workforce through high skill/wage/demand career pathways.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY COLLEGES TRAINING GRANTS

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

This second round of Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants (SCC2) will increase the capacity and responsiveness of community colleges to close equity gaps in addressing skill development needs of employers and workers, in support of the Biden-Harris Administration's priorities to leverage and advance community colleges. Awarded grants will focus on accelerated learning strategies that support skill development, rapid reskilling, and employment through targeted industry sectors and career pathway approaches. These strategies will also address identified equity gaps to increase full access to educational and economic opportunity– particularly for individuals from historically underrepresented and marginalized populations and communities.

This Opportunity is built around four core elements: 1) Advancing Equity, 2) Accelerated Career Pathways, 3) Results-Driven Project Design, and 4) Sustainable Systems Change.

This grant program builds on the learnings from the four rounds of Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grants, which focused on capacity building at community colleges and large-scale systems change within community college consortia. SCC2 grants will focus on advancing equitable employment throughout the grant program, specifically equity gaps in opportunities for credentials, and equity in employment outcomes for the participants served by the community colleges and may also include increasing the capacity of the colleges to make sustainable shifts in how they support equitable employment.

ELIGIBILITY

The eligible lead applicant must be a community college that is a public institution of higher education as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act and who's most common degree awarded is an associate degree.

DEADLINE

Applications are to be submitted by June 2, 2022. A similar deadline is anticipated, annually.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/skills-training-grants/scc

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY COLLEGES TRAINING GRANTS

FUNDED PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

FUNDED ORGANIZATION
Broward College

PROJECT TITLE
Micro-credentialing in Higher Education (MicroHE)

AMOUNT FUNDED
$1,999,992

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
The activities of the MicroHE project include developing a framework with employer and faculty input, developing a process for awarding micro-credentials/badges using a technology-based digital platform system, supporting workforce education and apprenticeship programs leading to micro-credentials/badging, prior learning assessments and industry certifications used to grant credit to accelerate participants to a Technical Certificate and degree, distance learning infrastructure to enable participants to participate in workforce education, outreach materials for distribution within the Broward UP/Opportunity Zone communities, and a comprehensive evaluation.

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION
https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/skillstraining/SCC-Overview-and-Abstracts-rev.pdf

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE
https://www.broward.edu/

FUNDING INNOVATION IN THE K-12 CLASSROOM

By: Patrick Riedy, Grants Development Consultant (K-12 Education)

Ask anyone involved in K-12 Education and they can run through a list of persistent challenges for their students. Many will illustrate exactly how those hurdles prevent learners from realizing their full potential. Thankfully, if those obstacles are related a student's social-emotional learning or troublesome subject areas, such as science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), support is available! Several grant opportunities aim to encourage innovative methods and approaches to issues that might inhibit long-term achievement and student progress.

In addition to highlighting some tips and resources to help you get a jump-start of your next innovative project proposal, there are two popular programs focused on funding innovation within the classroom: **Education Innovation and Research (EIR)**, from the U.S. Department of Education, and **Innovative Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers (ITEST)**, from the National Science Foundation. But first, it's important to understand what grant makers mean when they say innovation.

WHAT EXACTLY IS INNOVATION

In my previous career teaching literature to high school seniors, our Dean of Faculty emphasized the importance of helping students adopt a growth mindset and stressed ways to better incorporate problem-based learning in my classroom activities. At the end of every school year, I'd inventory what worked and what didn't and add a few new tools to my toolbox, ready to take on the challenges of a new school year head-on.

When I look back, I was implementing innovative teaching methods. They may have not stood on the forefront of pedagogy, but they worked! Someone, somewhere, had the novel idea that students might be more motivated to learn if they were presented with a problem to solve before obtaining all relevant and applicable knowledge. Then, their learned problem-solving skills empowered them and taught a valuable lesson in collaboration.

When grant makers state they want to fund innovation, they want to invest in proposals that create new ideas or methods, just like the development of problem-based learning. Innovations should address priority areas grant makers have identified in their program's purpose, while keeping in mind that these innovative ideas or methods are not tried and true and don't have exhaustive evidence to their efficacy. In fact, innovation is often the exact opposite; it is something that may simply demonstrate a rational or have minimal research with respect to its efficacy. Because of that, applicants might find the prospect of applying for these types of grants daunting. And for good reason: supporting innovation is a risk-taking endeavor for all involved. To help mitigate that risk, here are some tips and tricks to help you develop a promising new idea or method:

1. **Identify the root of a problem and then work towards the solution.** Every challenge is unique and can manifest itself in a multitude of ways. If you can locate and articulate the specific way(s) problem areas affect your students, then you can begin to evaluate ways to solve the root of the problem.

2. **Take an inventory of what works.** Are there any tried and true methods that work for your school? Some of the best innovations come from identifying commonalities within success stories. A new method or idea can grow from what has already proven itself to be effective.

3. **Find inspiration from others.** Databases such as the What Works Clearinghouse provide interventions and evidence to see what has (or hasn't) worked. It can also help you to understand if your innovation is unique and new. You can also find successful projects on the EIR website or ITEST awards. These can give you a good idea of how comprehensive a rationale is needed and what gap your project might fulfill.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES THAT SUPPORT INNOVATION

There are two major grant opportunities that look to support innovation in the K-12 classroom. The first program is titled **Education Innovation and Research**, or EIR, available to local education agencies, State education agencies, the bureau of Indian Education, a consortium of LEAs or SEAs, or nonprofit organizations, including a public institute of higher education that has 501(c)(3) status.

Since EIR is designed in a tiered structure, there are three types of EIR grants: early-phase, mid-phase, and expansion. These tiers are differentiated by the level of evidence required to support the project's ability to produce proposed outcomes. The idea is that promising projects that may begin in the early phase, with little to no evidence beyond a demonstrative rational, can advance through the tiers in future competitions. Total funding for FY22 is $159,400,000. Between eleven and twenty grants will be awarded with a maximum award of $4 million. A 10% cost match is required; funds may be cash or in-kind and come from federal, State, local, or private sources. The FY22 budget saw an increase of 20% in funding for this program, with a final appropriation of $234 million. Award information is currently "to be determined."

No matter what tier you feel your project may best fit, there are some common elements to keep in mind:

1. Projects must target high need students, which you get to define. These can include students from low-income families, rural areas, underrepresented, or underperforming.

2. A project must also build the knowledge base of effective practices

3. Evaluation of the project will be key. Measure the impact of the innovation on new populations and new settings, identify core elements for replicability, and examine cost-effectiveness of the innovation.

23

Historically, priority areas have included innovations in STEM education, with an emphasis on computer science, as well as Social-Emotional Learning, or SEL. Although the FY22 notice of invitation to apply has not yet been published, the FY22 budget explanatory statement provides some indication that these priorities could remain unchanged. The totals for EIR includes $82 million for SEL and $82 million for STEM and computer science. The first absolute priority area for all projects is that applicants must demonstrate a rationale. Applicants then select another priority area in either: 1.) general field-initiated innovations, 2.) equity in student access to STEM education, or 3.) meeting social, emotional, and academic needs of students. Unlike previous years, EIR has shrunk competitive preferences down to only two: 1.) promoting equity in student access to educational resources and 2.) opportunities and addressing the impact of COVID-19 on students, educators, and faculty. Furthermore, the agreement encourages that the Department of Education take necessary steps to ensure that the statutory set-aside for rural areas, at least 25% of total funds, is met. To qualify as a rural applicant, two of the following requirements must be met:

1. The applicant is
   - An LEA with an urban-centric district locale code of 32, 33, 41, 42, or 43, as determined by the Secretary
   - A consortium of such LEAs;
   - An educational service agency or a nonprofit organization in partnership with such an LEA; or
   - A grantee described in the first two bullets in partnership with an SEA; AND
2. Many of the schools to be served by the program are designated with a locale code of 32, 33, 41, 42, or 43, or a combination of such codes, as determined by the Secretary.

The notice inviting applications for EIR was released on April 27, 2022. An optional letter of intent to apply is due May 27, 2022, and full applications for early-phase applicants are due July 21, 2022. Now is an excellent time to reach out to potential partners and begin brainstorming ideas for innovations for this or next year's competition.

ON THE TOPIC OF PARTNERS

The second program that supports innovation in the K-12 classroom is titled **Innovative Technology Experiences for Students and Teaches, or ITEST**, and is run by the National Science Foundation. With a deadline of August 12, 2022, ITEST looks to support a highly proficient and diverse STEM workforce to advance the fields of science, engineering, and technology throughout the United States.

As an applied research and development program, ITEST seeks out applications that advance the equitable and inclusive integration of technology in STEM learning from pre-K through high school.

ITEST supports three types of projects of relevance to PK-12 classrooms:

1. Exploring theory and design principals, with awards up to three years and $500,000

2. Developing and testing innovations, with awards up to four years and $1,300,000

3. Scaling, expanding, and iterating innovation, with awards up to five years and $3,500,000

Given the rigorous expectations of research by the National Science Foundation, K-12 schools interested in ITEST should partner and act as subrecipients with institutes of higher education, who should serve as the lead applicant.

Although conceiving a project that centers innovation may appear difficult on the surface, know that steps can be taken to identify problems and brainstorm solutions. Resources can be leveraged to see what's been successful and where needs have yet to be addressed. Collaboration may prove beneficial, especially if your district lacks the capacity for research but demonstrates immense need. Whether looking to foster new ways to improve the SEL climate within your school or improve the performance of students in STEM, **Education Innovation and Research** and **Innovative Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers** signal a substantial investment in finding new ways to tackle old problems.

INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY EXPERIENCES FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS (ITEST)

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

ITEST is an applied research and development program with goals to advance the equitable and inclusive integration of technology in the learning and teaching of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) from pre-kindergarten through high school. The program's objective is to support all students' acquisition of the foundational preparation in STEM disciplines. Preparation for the current and future workforce is increasingly dependent upon the application and use of technology and computing. Proposed ITEST projects are expected to

- engage students in technology-rich learning to develop disciplinary and/or transdisciplinary STEM content knowledge, including skills in data literacy and evidence-based decision-making and reasoning;

- prioritize the full inclusion of groups who have been underrepresented and/or underserved, including but not limited to Blacks and African Americans, Alaska Natives, Hispanics and Latinos, Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, Native Pacific Islanders, persons with disabilities, neurodiverse students, and women in the STEM and information and communication technologies (ICT) workforce;

- motivate students to pursue appropriate education pathways to technology-rich careers; and

- leverage strategic and community partnerships to expand education pathways in communities through public and private partnerships and collaborations.

ELIGIBILITY

All U.S. organizations with an educational mission are eligible for ITEST. All ITEST projects must demonstrate evidence of partnerships and collaboration in the formulation, implementation, and/or interpretation and dissemination of the project. It is highly recommended that research-capable entities serve as the lead applicant and K-12 districts or schools act as a sub-recipient.

DEADLINE

Applications are to be submitted be 5:00p.m submitter's local time on August 12, 2022. A similar deadline is anticipated, annually.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://beta.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/innovative-technology-experiences-students-and-teachers-itest

INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY EXPERIENCES FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS (ITEST)

FUNDED PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

FUNDED ORGANIZATION
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

PROJECT TITLE
Actualizing STEM Potential in the Mississippi Delta

AMOUNT FUNDED
$1,641,313

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
This project will advance efforts of the Innovative Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers (ITEST) program to better understand and promote practices that increase students' motivations and capacities to pursue careers in fields of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) by investigating the effectiveness of an existing collaborative robotics program. The program will positively influence the engineering self-efficacy and orientation to STEM majors with African American students living in an underserved region of the United States, the Mississippi Delta. Students in this program are immersed in engineering design activities requiring the application of science and mathematics principles. The program model includes pre-engineering courses in computer science, computer aided drafting, and electronics. These are designed and facilitated by university faculty. Undergraduate seniors are trained by faculty and then serve as mentors. Engineering design activities, career orientation activities and robotics summer camps for elementary and middle school students are facilitated by high school faculty. At the beginning of the spring semester, students participate in an international robotics competition. This robotics program is year-long and occurs after school, and halfway through the year students enter their designs in a robotics competition. Beginning in their freshmen year, students are allowed to remain in the program throughout their years in high school. An understanding of the components that positively influence the African American students' beliefs about their abilities in STEM disciplines and their perceptions of their identification with STEM could be useful for understanding and decreasing the gap in STEM majors that exists with students from underserved populations in the United States.

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION
https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward?AWD_ID=1511792&HistoricalAwards=false

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE
https://vt.edu/

ESPORTS: FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

By Liz Shay, Senior Grants Development Consultant (Higher Education)

Esports are hugely popular; current projections show that there will soon be 30 million monthly esports viewers. The National Association of Collegiate Esports (NACE) currently lists nearly 200 colleges and universities with varsity esports programs, and many more schools have club teams or curricular esports programs. K-12 organizations are increasingly getting involved with esports as well.

Supporters of esports programs advocate for the noncognitive skills (such as emotion management and teamwork) that playing can develop. The competitors can also develop technical skills that could help them with future employment in broadcasting, event production, or information technology fields. Institutes of higher education are also using esports as a recruitment tool.

With so many potential advantages, more and more school districts and institutes of higher education are implementing esports programs. But these initiatives require significant funding to be successful. In this article we'll explore the difficulties education organizations can face when seeking external funding for their esports projects, as well as potential opportunities.

CHALLENGES WITH ESPORTS FUNDING

Your school may be interested in starting an esports club or a competitive team or even potentially esports curriculum or degree programs. While grant makers appreciate enthusiasm, they are a bit more cautious about esports for a variety of reasons. Factors include alignment with their current funding priorities and allowable costs. However, there are also other reasons that they are hesitant to fund esports projects. Understanding the following roadblocks could help you convince them of the importance and relevance of your esports project.

1. **Federal and State Regulations:** Grant opportunities coming from public sources have strict requirements about allowable uses of funds. For education entities, this means that funding must be used for mission-driven activities like student learning outcomes, workforce development, and research. Competitive sports teams (and even clubs) are viewed as tertiary functions of the institution and cannot draw from general institutional funds. For most schools, these departments (like Athletics or Residential Life) must be self-supporting through fees, ticket sales, or donors.

2. **Competition-Oriented Activity Limitations:** Federal and state grants do not usually fund competition-oriented activities. In the few instances where these grant makers are funding competition, the projects are focused on understanding how the competition can facilitate student learning outcomes or workforce readiness initiatives. For example, they may fund a robot battle tournament because success in the competition is clearly tied to ability to understand and apply engineering principles.

3. **Lack of Long-Term Efficacy Research:** Grant makers are usually hesitant to invest in any activities that they view as being potentially risky or a fad. They instead focus on initiatives that have longitudinal, peer-reviewed research validating the approach. It's possible that as more research becomes available exploring the impact of esports on student success, the strength of the esports industry, or the ability of esports to facilitate future employment, grant makers may be more interested in considering esports proposals.

Esports is becoming increasingly popular at education organizations, but grant seeking for these initiatives can still be difficult.

ESPORTS GRANT SEEKING OPPORTUNITIES

When esports first started to become popular a decade ago, there were several corporate-sponsored competitive grant opportunities designed to increase awareness. In many instances, schools were given free products or team start-up costs. Now, education organizations have demonstrated that they're interested in esports and are willing to pay to form and develop programs on their own, resulting in many of these grant programs being phased out. However, there are still options available for funding your esports projects!

1. **Reposition Your Project Away from Competition:** Think about the learning or workforce development initiatives your esports plans will facilitate. Grant makers are weary about funding competition, but they are often much more comfortable funding the same necessary line items (such as equipment and staff training) when the project is framed as helping to meet mission-driven goals for your school. For example, studying esports may allow students to better understand game design and user experience concerns, which could then go into a broader computer science curriculum. This justification will be more appealing to grant makers than a request for esports funding to help your school win league titles.

2. **Consider Foundation Funding:** Foundations are not constrained by the same regulations around use of public funds, so they are often open to a wider variety of projects. It's important to focus on finding the right grant maker by making connections between your project and the mission of the funder. For esports initiatives, look for foundations interested in supporting education organizations with specific, relevant education goals. For example, you may want to look for a foundation that focuses on computer programming, journalism, or event planning. As is the case with federal and state funders, you should consider the skills your students will be developing as part of their esports experience and focus your justification on those applications.

3. **Seek Alternative External Funding:** If your esports program is not going to include any focus on educational outcomes, you may have more success considering other sources of external funding outside of grants. One of the most popular approaches is sponsorship. Usually, the sponsor wants something in exchange for their investment, such as their name and logo on the team's jersey. Think about what you need and choose potential sponsors based on those needs. Determine ahead of time what you're willing to give in exchange for their donation. Your school's fundraising team may also be able to help with these efforts.

Regardless of how you approach seeking external funding for your esports initiatives, many of the skills you've developed from doing other grant seeking still applies for these projects. Make sure you are finding grant makers that align with your desired interests and outcomes. For esports, it's especially important to brainstorm before you explore the funding landscape to understand possible mission-driven education goals that your project may impact. Once you've chosen a grant, align your final project and budget with the priorities of that grant maker and their allowable costs. Finally, don't forget to thank the grant maker after receiving a decision and keep them updated on how your project progresses if you are funded!

ON THE ROAD:

May 10-11, 2022
Merit Member Conference
The Henry in Dearborn, Michigan
Getting Grants Ready for IIJA Broadband Funding
5/10/22 10-10:45 AM ET
Learn More HERE

June 14-16, 2022
D&H THREAD Technology Conference
Hershey Lodge in Hershey, Pennsylvania
How to Grant Write for Your Future
Date and Time TBD
Learn More HERE

June 15-17, 2022
The Learning Ideas Conference
The Faculty House Conference Center in New York City
Funding Institutional Innovation Needs Through Grants
6/17/22 3:15-4:15 PM ET
Learn More HERE

June 27-30, 2022
IACLEA Annual Conference and Exposition
MGM Grand Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada
Grant Funding for Campus Safety Technology
6/27/22 10:30-11:30 AM ET
Learn More HERE

UPCOMING GRANTSCASTS:

Funding to Expand Digital Access for Education and Government Agencies
Sponsored by HP and Microsoft
Date: May 24, 2022 – 2pm ET
Register HERE

New events are added weekly. Visit grantsoffice.info/webcasts for a full schedule and to watch previous Grantscasts.

RECENT GRANTSCASTS:

The Final Rule: How the Fiscal Recovery Funds Can Support Your Government's Cybersecurity Initiatives
Sponsored by Rubrik
Download and Playback HERE

Plan Ahead! The 2022 Grants Funding Landscape for Your Next Technology-Enabled Project in Education or Government
Sponsored by HP, AMD, and Microsoft
Download and Playback HERE

Infrastructure Act: Secrets to Get Your Technology Funded
Sponsored by SHI
Download and Playback HERE

Modernizing Government Identity: ARPA and Infrastructure Funds Available for Cybersecurity Initiatives in 2022
Sponsored by Okta
Download and Playback HERE

FOIA Compliance in Education
Sponsored by GovQA
Download and Playback HERE