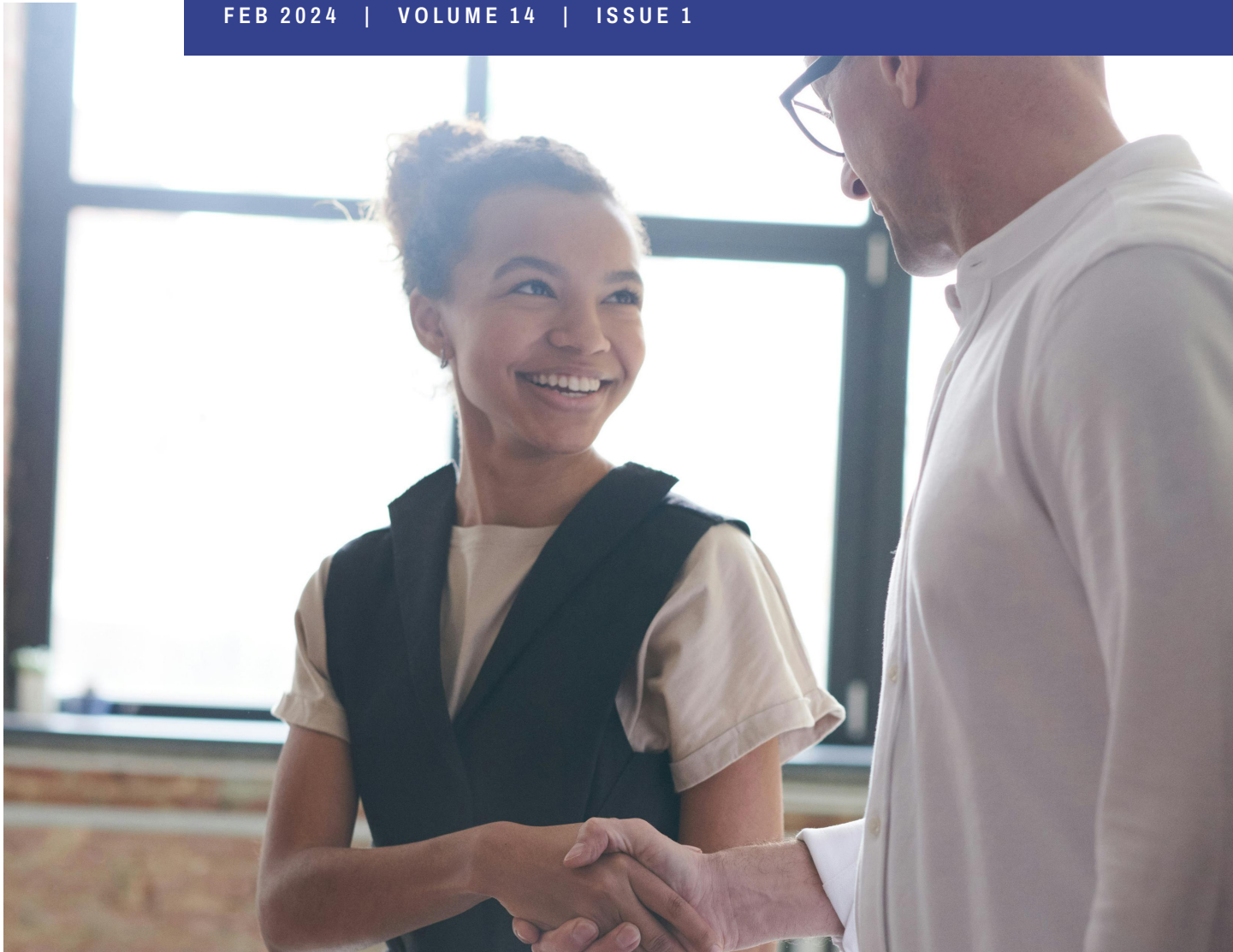


 A GRANTS OFFICE PUBLICATION

FUNDED

THE AMERICAS

FEB 2024 | VOLUME 14 | ISSUE 1



Working Well with Others: Grantseeking as a Team

Also: The role of data in education funding, funding for healthcare workforce shortages, a look at the Canadian grants landscape, and more.



In This Issue

Working Well with Others: Grantseeking as a Team	4
Creating Connections: A Brief Guide to Establishing Meaningful Relationships with Foundations for Nonprofit Funding	10
Healthcare Workforce Shortages	11
Tourism Growth Program - Driving Economic, Environmental, and Cultural Sustainability.....	13
Green Shipping Corridors Program: Navigating towards sustainability.....	14
Safe Streets and Roads for All: What Has Been Funded and What to Expect in 2024.....	16
Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Broadband-Related Funding: Where are We Now and Where are We Going?	20
Thinking About Using AI for Grant Writing? Read This First!	24
Data in Education: How it is used and how it can be helpful in Grantseeking.....	28

Letter From the Editor

February 2, 2024

As we enter 2024 and continue on the path toward a post-pandemic “new normal,” we’ve re-examined some of the core social functions that were disrupted in 2020 and attempted to level-set some expectations for these activities going forward – as always, from the standpoint of funding! To that end, this issue of **FUNDED The Americas** covers some familiar themes like **Dr. Marc Smithers’** cover article on *effective team building for grant-funded projects* and **Meghan Jacobsen’s** tips for *building relationships with foundation funders*.

But of course, interpersonal connections aren’t the only casualties of our pandemic experience. We also saw a significant strain on already *short-handed healthcare systems*, and in her article, **Amber Walker** highlights a number of federal programs aimed at addressing that crisis – programs that support growth in trained specialists (in geriatrics, for example) as well as those that address shortfalls in the whole categories of nursing practitioners.

Travel has come roaring back since the pandemic, and shipping grew dramatically over the past few years. And there are grants for these as well – in *Canada!* In this issue, **Stephanie Cesar** covers funding both for *expanding tourism* and *developing more green corridors* in the land to the north (of the US).

Lest we risk losing the breadth you have come to expect from FUNDED, we have also included several articles on current developments in funding not (directly) related to the pandemic as well. **Joseph Phelan** has written an interesting summary of the *Safe Streets and Roads for All program*, and **Dr. Liz Shay** has provided a number of updates to the *IJA’s multi-faceted broadband funding* as well. And speaking of up-to date, **Elizabeth Evans** and **Christina Fernandez** wrap up this issue on the technical side with great articles on *the role and promise of AI* and *data* (respectively) in modern grants development.

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



**FOLLOW GRANTS
OFFICE ON TWITTER
AND LINKEDIN!**

 [@GrantsOffice](https://twitter.com/GrantsOffice)

 [Grants Office](https://www.linkedin.com/company/grants-office)

Working Well with Others: Grantseeking as a Team

Dr. Marc Smithers, Grants Development Associate (Higher Education)

For those new to the world of grantseeking, the amount of information available can be daunting. Between the complexity of various applications, the numerous types of funders and types of projects that you can apply for, and the announcements of funding opportunities spread out among thousands of departments and their unique websites among all levels of government, individuals seeking grant funding can become overwhelmed. It can be a Herculean effort to manage all aspects of the grant application process, and if it can be avoided, it is one that should not be a one-person show. While there are many examples of individuals seeking grants, writing and submitting the application themselves, and being awarded funding, it is always better to apply for grant funding as a team. One of the best things you can do when starting your grantseeking journey is to build a team that will work together to achieve your funding goals.

WHY BUILD A TEAM?

When coaching grant seekers in the usefulness of teams, there is often a bit of skepticism at the suggestion. Nearly everyone, at some point, has had a bad experience with group projects and there can sometimes be a vision in the minds of some grant seekers that they will be the sole person responsible for securing a million dollar plus grant for their institution. In my work with higher education institutions, a common concern in building a grantseeking team is the impenetrability of divisional silos that are hard to overcome in creating an effective team. Despite these concerns, building a team is worth the effort. Why?

1. More Experiences, More Expertise

Having the expertise of a broad range of individuals strengthens your application and also provides you with insights from other fields that you would not have if you were to seek funding alone. This is especially true if you are a first-time grantseeker. Having others on your team that have been through the grantseeking process before can give you a better sense of what to include in your project proposal, how to interact with program managers, and how to tailor your application for the unique interests of the grantmaker.



Knowing that teams are an effective aspect of grant funded projects, several grant opportunities actually require teams and partnerships as an essential piece of applications. The Office on Violence Against Women's program for institutions of higher education, the Reduce Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking on Campus Program requires both internal partnerships and external partnerships detailed in two memorandums of understanding to be submitted along with an institution's application. The Computer Science for All Program from the National Science Foundation likewise requires the formation of partnerships between academic researchers and PreK-12 practitioners to improve the teaching of computer science and computational thinking for all American students.

2. Demonstrate Collective Buy-In

Funders want to back projects that whole institutions and communities can benefit from and support. While the vision of a single individual can be compelling for funders to consider, it is always more attractive to funders to see a larger group of individuals excited and committed to see a project through successful completion. Building a team to design a project and apply for funding demonstrates to funders that there is collective buy-in within the institution and the surrounding community.

3. Create Realistic and Comprehensive Budgets

A team of individuals coming from various parts of an institution or community can ensure that the program budget includes everything that is needed. A common error grantseekers make in their application is to propose a project that is unable to be successfully completed with the budget proposed. A team will enable you to see the various needs that a budget must include, can spread out the work of contacting vendors for accurate quotes, and anticipate any red tape that must be addressed in the process.

WHO SHOULD BE ON THE TEAM?

Once you commit to building a grantseeking team, then comes the challenging task of deciding who should be on it. While you know your institution best and likely have an idea of who have proven to be effective collaborators and colleagues, there are a number of individuals who we recommend including on your team in order to submit a successful grant application.

1. The Decision-Makers

These are the individuals at your institution who have the final sign-off on larger, more comprehensive projects. You need the approval and support of those in leadership at your institution, whether it is your institution's president, superintendent, chief operating or executive officer, or board chair. While these decision-makers may not be heavily involved in the day-to-day operations of your team, they need to be on board with your project and ultimately support the direction of your work.

2. The Financial Representative

Including someone from your finance, advancement, and sponsored programs office is essential for your work. They will have the best knowledge of how your institution manages payroll, contracts with vendors, relationships with any foundations you may engage, and more. These individuals will also be the ones who end up receiving and tracking any funding you receive, so it is best to include them early in the process.

3. The Implementers

The folks who are going to do the day-to-day work of meeting the stated goals and objectives of your project need to be on your grantseeking team. This includes faculty and program staff charged with implementing the project, but it also includes IT staff tasked with procuring and supporting the technology needs essential to your project's success. Ensure that each of your implementers has a seat at the table at an early stage in your team's work.

4. The Partners

If your institution is partnering with any external organizations, they need to be involved in the grantseeking team when appropriate and as early as possible, especially if the success of your project depends on the partnership of an external organization. Partners can also add valuable expertise and resources, and demonstrate to the funder that there is buy-in to the project from outside the institution.

5. The Writer

Whether you will be using a grant writer from within or outside your institution to do the pen to paper work of completing your application, it is essential they are engaged with your team throughout the process.

Members of a grantseeking team will have varying levels of involvement and commitment to the team's work. Decision-Makers may only come to one or two of your team's meetings, but their support and involvement in the direction of the team's project is a key piece for your team's success.



HOW TO IMPROVE THE WORK OF YOUR TEAM?

Having your team in place is just the first step toward better grantseeking. It is vital that your team work as effectively as possible. Here are some steps you can take to avoid common mistakes made by grantseeking teams.

1. Clearly define roles

A common trap teams fall into is failing to clearly define the responsibilities and expectations of all members of the team. Ensure that your team does not make this mistake by defining members' roles clearly and openly. Defer to one another's expertise and experiences and assign roles and responsibilities for which each member is well suited. These roles can be as formally defined as drawing up a memorandum of understanding or as informal as spelling them out in the minutes of an early team meeting. However formal, it is most important that it is done with intention and understanding among all parties.

2. Communicate often and openly

Teams work most effectively in environments of open communication. Setting expectations for the frequency and manner of communication for your team is a crucial step in your success. Come to a consensus on how often your team will meet, whether you will discuss agenda items informally between meetings, how you will keep a record of your meetings and the progress of your group, and an overall time commitment to the project among your group's members. Openly discussing these matters will ensure that your team knows what is expected and how they can best contribute.

3. Create a realistic application timeline

There are few things more discouraging to a team than to work hard on a project to see it fail due to poor planning and time management. A useful way to guarantee your team will have enough time to submit a successful proposal is to backwards map your application timeline from when the application deadline is, setting benchmarks for key project dates along the way, including when you will obtain quotes from vendors, when drafts of your project narrative will be completed and by whom, and when you will confirm your institution is registered in the system used by the funder to collect applications. Setting a realistic timeline with key benchmarks will provide an ample runway for your grantseeking team to complete all necessary tasks to submit a maximally competitive application.

CONCLUSION

Acknowledging that you will find more success in your grantseeking journey by engaging with a team is a strategic decision that can help you create the strongest application for your funding needs. It is in the best interest of you and your organization to do the hard work of building a team of individuals committed to fully developing and carrying out a project that will attract the attention of grantmakers while giving funders confidence that their money will be well spent on a worthy and impactful cause that has the wide support of a team and the comprehensive buy-in of an entire institution.





Grants Office needs writers!

Do you have experience grantwriting for education institutions, state and local government municipalities, healthcare providers, or non-profit organizations?

Grants Office is a full-service provider of strategic grants development services. Our approach is based on collaboration and open communication among team members. Our grant writers work directly with clients to help develop all elements of their project, and coordinate submission of a high-quality, competitive, technology-friendly proposal.

**WE'RE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR NEW WRITERS,
JOIN THE TEAM TODAY!**

Email info@grantsoffice.com (SUBJECT: APPLICATION: Grant Writer) with:

- Your CV
- A listing of the agencies for which you have submitted grants
- A listing of the grant programs for which you have been a proposal reviewer, if any
- 2 writing samples (preferably narratives from successfully funded projects)

Program Snapshot

Reduce Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking On Campus

SUMMARY

The Grants to Reduce Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking on Campus Program (Campus Program) encourages institutions of higher education to develop and strengthen effective security and investigation strategies to combat domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking on campus, develop and strengthen victim services in cases involving such crimes on campus, and develop and strengthen prevention education and awareness programs.

Program requirements include creating a Coordinated Community Response (CCR) including partnerships with external law enforcement agencies and community victim service providers, and internal departments such as student affairs, campus security, campus-based victim service providers, campus housing, and campus disciplinary board members. In FY 2023, OVW was interested in supporting the following priority areas:

- Advance racial equity as an essential component of ending sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.
- Improve outreach, services, civil and criminal justice responses, prevention, and support for survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking from underserved communities, particularly LGBTQ and immigrant communities.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants are limited to Institutions of higher education in the United States and U.S. territories, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, and other Minority Serving Institutions.

DEADLINE

Applications were to be submitted by May 9, 2023. A similar deadline is anticipated, annually.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.justice.gov/ovw/campus-program>



Funded Project Highlight

Reduce Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking On Campus

FUNDED ORGANIZATION

Azusa Pacific University

PROJECT TITLE

“Azusa Pacific University Campus Program”

AMOUNT FUNDED

\$400,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Azusa Pacific University is a private, faith-based, Hispanic serving institution located in Azusa, California. With this new award, Azusa Pacific University, in collaboration with the Project Sister Family Services and the Azusa Police Department, will: 1) create a coordinated community response team to oversee all planning and implementation activities; 2) provide prevention programming, including bystander intervention and ongoing prevention activities, to all students on domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking; 3) provide ongoing training to all campus law enforcement on how to effectively respond to these crimes; 4) provide access to 24-hour confidential victim services and advocacy; and 5) conduct ongoing training to all personnel in the campus resolution process.

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION

<https://www.highergov.com/grant/15JOVW23GG04452HBCU>

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE

<http://www.apu.edu>



Creating Connections: A Brief Guide to Establishing Meaningful Relationships with Foundations for Nonprofit Funding

Meghan Jacobsen, Grants Development Associate (State and Local Government)

In the world of nonprofit organizations, securing funding is often a crucial part of conducting the mission and initiative of supporting communities. While there are various avenues for fundraising, building strong relationships with foundations is a vital component of the grantseeking process. Foundations exist to support social causes, and establishing meaningful connections with them can lead to successful long-term partnerships. If your organization is new to foundation grants, you may be wondering where to start. Here are a few tips to create lasting and meaningful partnerships with foundations, thus enabling your organization to flourish.

1. DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Before reaching out to any foundation, it is essential to thoroughly understand their mission, values, and focus areas. Foundations often have specific causes or issues they prioritize, and ensuring your organization's goals align with theirs is key. Research their past grants, annual reports, and any public statements to gain insights into their priorities.

Make sure you understand the grant application procedure for the foundation you are interested in, as each foundation has its own unique process. Some foundations may require a letter of intent as the initial step, while others prefer direct outreach for discussions about your organization and intended project prior to applying. There are also foundations that exclusively accept applications through invitation, in which case, building a relationship prior to seeking funding is essential.



2. BUILD PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

Foundations are not just faceless entities; they are run by individuals who are passionate about making a difference. Take the time to build personal connections with program officers, trustees, or other key decision-makers within the foundation. Attend networking events, conferences, and engage with them through social media platforms. Look to your own organization or current partners for any foundation connections they may have and if they are willing to facilitate introductions.

3. SHOW YOUR GRATITUDE

What happens after you have gone through the application process and are awarded funding for your project? This is the perfect time to showcase how the funding has impacted your organization and the community. Take the time to express gratitude and highlight the ways in which the funding propelled your project forward. Providing updates on how their contributions were utilized – beyond any reporting requirements – and the outcomes achieved helps build a sense of continuity and trust. This can be done by sending a newsletter or inviting them to an open house to see their dollars in action.

4. MAINTAIN THE RELATIONSHIP

Building relationships with foundations is not a one-time effort. Cultivate long-term relationships by keeping funders updated on your progress, inviting them to events, and involving them in key decisions. Regularly communicate about the impact of their support and express appreciation for their ongoing commitment.

Building strong relationships with foundations is a strategic and ongoing process that requires dedication, authenticity, and effective communication. By aligning your organization's mission with the values of potential funders and maintaining transparent and open communication, you can increase your chances of securing funding and establishing lasting partnerships that contribute in a positive way to your organization and the community you serve.

Healthcare Workforce Shortages

Amber Walker, Grants Development Associate (Healthcare)

Following years of challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the United States continues to see workforce shortages across the healthcare services industry. This trend was anticipated prior to 2020, however, the pandemic accelerated the rate at which physicians, nurses and other healthcare professionals have left and continue to leave the field. According to the Association of American Medical Colleges, the United States is projected to face a workforce shortage of up to 124,000 physicians by 2034. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects nearly 195,400 nursing positions will be vacant and openings for home health aides and other personal health aide workers will increase by 37% by the year 2028.

The rise in vacancies is projected to continue for reasons beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. One of these reasons is an aging general population. People are living longer with more chronic health conditions, requiring more care, and the physician and nursing workforce are also aging out of service. According to the U.S. Census Bureau data in 2010, there were [40.3 million](#) Americans aged 65 and older. By 2034, it is predicted that number will be [77 million](#).

Healthcare workforce shortages will have system wide effects, impacting patients from all backgrounds and geographic locations. Patients across the board will experience decreased healthcare access but communities with a high concentration of homeless individuals, minority community members, high concentrations of poverty, and rural communities will see these effects with more frequency and severity. Currently, millions of Americans live in “Medically Underserved Area” and “Health Professional Shortage Area,” designations assigned by the Health Resource Services Administration (HRSA) to describe “geographic areas and populations with a lack of access to primary care services” and “areas have a shortage of primary, dental, or mental health care providers.” This population will continue to rise as the healthcare workforce continues to decline.

The predictions of workforce deficiencies do not paint an optimistic outlook for the future of healthcare, but there are opportunities for corrective action. While there is no ‘one size fits all’ solution to the healthcare shortage in the United States, steps can be taken to prepare for this reality. Stakeholders from all points of connection to the healthcare industry need to collaborate to alleviate some of the strain on the system.

Many at the *point of care* in the healthcare sector are looking for grant funding to help them overcome these workforce issues and meet their delivery objectives. Some of the most common *areas of focus* for grant funding are medical education and training, expanding telemedicine and team-based care models, improving physician well-being and retention, promoting health equity and diversity in the workforce, and recruiting international candidates. In recent years, hundreds of millions in grant funding have been awarded to hospitals, health centers, medical research programs, primary care facilities, and telehealth programs through **federal** and **state government** and **private foundation** support.

In the area of healthcare workforce development, many multi-pronged grant funding opportunities have been developed. One program, designed to make education more accessible, is the **Nurse Faculty Loan Program (NFLP)**. The goal of NFLP is to “increase the number of qualified nursing faculty nationwide by providing low interest loans for individuals studying to be nurse faculty and loan cancellation for those who then go on to work as faculty.” Another program, designed to alleviate healthcare burdens to rural communities, is the **Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME)** program. The purpose of THCGME is to “provide funding to support the training of residents in primary care residency training programs in community-based ambulatory patient care centers... particularly in rural and underserved communities...” An example of a workforce development opportunity that addresses a root cause of the healthcare worker shortage is the **Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP)**. The purpose of the GWEP is to educate and train healthcare and supportive care workforces to care for older adults by collaborating with community partners. Programs such as this are essential to address the rapid growth of an aging population. If your organization is pursuing grant funding to address workforce shortages in your healthcare system, the above discussed funding programs are a great place to start. All three of these programs are funded through the Health Resource Services Administration and are just a small fraction of a grants landscape that has identified our healthcare system’s resiliency as a top funding priority.

Additional healthcare funding resources:

- Health Resource Services Administration (HRSA)
- Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
- [grants.gov](#) (search of national private foundations for programs that align with your service delivery priority and objectives)

Program Snapshot

Tourism Growth Program (Canada)



SUMMARY

The Tourism Growth Program (TGP) is a key element of the new Federal Tourism Growth Strategy, which builds on Canada's inherent strengths and unique qualities while using a whole-of-government approach to realize the full potential of the tourism industry. The program will support Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, small and medium-sized businesses and not-for-profit organizations in developing local, community-level tourism products and experiences to help more domestic and international visitors discover all that Canada has to offer. The TGP will fund projects that provide added value to existing activities in the tourism industry and focus on business and economic growth. Indigenous tourism is a priority under the TGP, and approximately 15% of TGP funding will support Indigenous-led tourism initiatives.

The TGP will help leverage tourism opportunities in communities, including those that are rural and remote. The program also complements support for the tourism industry provided through other federal, provincial and territorial programs. The Government of Canada's seven regional development agencies (ACOA, CED, CanNor, FedNor, FedDev Ontario, PrairiesCan, PacificCan) will deliver this program, given that their mandate is to promote regional economic development.

Eligible projects should provide added value to existing activities in the tourism industry and focus on business and economic growth. Priority may be given to projects that:

- increase tourism benefits for communities by driving visitation from urban centres to rural areas
- support the Indigenous tourism industry
- support economic, environmental and cultural sustainability
- support active outdoor experiences
- extend the tourism season
- complement supports provided through provincial/territorial programs

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants are Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, small and medium-sized businesses and not-for-profit organizations.

DEADLINE

Each regional development agency has their own application procedures and deadlines. Interested applicants should contact the appropriate agency directly for more information on how to apply.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

<https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/canadian-tourism-sector/en/tourism-growth-program>

Tourism Growth Program – Driving economic, environmental, and cultural sustainability

Stephanie Cesar, Grants Development Consultant (Canada)

To attract visitors and see the number of tourists increase to pre-COVID levels, the Canadian government has decided to act. One of the initiatives implemented is the Tourism Growth Program. This ambitious program aims to boost the dynamism of the country's tourism sector and launch its potential as a key driver of economic prosperity and job creation. [Canada's regional development agencies](#) will deliver this program as they have the mandate to promote regional economic development across all regions of Canada.

The program is designed to capitalize on Canada's unique assets and attract domestic and international visitors. The program aims to position Canada as a leading global tourism destination known for its magnificent natural wonders, cultural experiences, and outstanding hospitality.

Some of the program's objectives are:

- Encourage regional economics: Increase tourism spin-offs in communities by drawing visitors more to the regions, including rural communities. As a result, major festivals and events that already attract clients are not eligible.
- Cultural development: Emphasize the importance of Canada's cultural diversity by encouraging initiatives that highlight and preserve Indigenous cultures, local traditions, and artistic expressions as principal tourist attractions. Approximately 15% of the Tourism Growth Program is dedicated to Indigenous tourism initiatives.
- Sustainability: One of the foundations of the program is its commitment to sustainable tourism practices. Efforts are aimed at reducing environmental impact, protecting natural resources, and promoting environmentally friendly tourism initiatives. Develop more active tourism activities such as rock climbing, hiking, alpine skiing, cross-country skiing, and nautical and water sports.
- Tourism all year round: Promote Canada as an all-year-round destination by showcasing products, services, and experiences that could increase tourist activity beyond the traditional peak season and extend services throughout the year.



In Budget 2023, the government announced the creation of the Tourism Growth Program. This fund will invest up to \$108 million over 3 years to support communities, small and medium-sized businesses, and non-profit organizations to develop tourism projects and events. The maximum contribution amount per recipient will be up to \$250,000. Funds will typically be repayable for businesses and non-repayable for not-for-profit organizations. Canada's regional development agencies will accept applications on an ongoing basis. If tourism is not the main focus of the business or organization, they are not eligible under the Tourism Growth Program. As a result, restaurants or food services, hotel chains, the retail sector, and travel agencies are not eligible to apply for this funding opportunity.

The Tourism Growth Program intends to contribute significantly to Canada's GDP by increasing tourism-related revenue and creating employment opportunities across the country. The halt in tourism during the pandemic exacerbated many labor problems in the tourism sector, including pushing many employees towards other opportunities, exacerbating the gap that already existed. With multiple programs in place, including The Tourism Growth Program, the government hopes to rebuild the workforce.

The Tourism Growth Program demonstrates Canada's commitment to promoting a thriving and sustainable tourism industry. By combining strategic planning, community engagement, and a commitment to preserving the country's natural and cultural treasures, the program maps a course for a future in which Canada's tourism sector becomes a source of economic growth and global admiration.

To apply and learn more about the program, reach out to your development agency:

- [Pacific Economic Development Canada](#)
- [Prairies Economic Development Canada](#)
- [Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario](#)
- [Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario](#)
- [Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions](#)
- [Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency](#)
- [Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency](#)

Green Shipping Corridors Program: Navigating towards sustainability

Stephanie Cesar, Grants Development Consultant (Canada)



At a time when environmental awareness and sustainable practices are at the forefront, and as Canada strives to meet its greenhouse gas reduction target outlined in the [2030 Emissions Reduction Plan](#), the Government of Canada has embarked on a revolutionary journey towards a greener, more sustainable maritime future. The [Green Shipping Corridor Program](#), from Transport Canada, aims to revolutionize the country's marine industry. The Fund reflects a commitment to reduce the environmental footprint of marine transportation while promoting economic growth.

The Green Shipping Corridors Fund is designed to address the environmental challenges associated with the maritime sector along the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence Seaway, and Canada's East and West Coasts. The program allocates resources to projects that improve efficiency, reduce emissions, and promote innovation in the maritime sector. To meet the various challenges facing this sector, the program offers grants under two different streams:

1. Clean Ports Stream
2. Clean Vessel demonstration Stream

CLEAN PORTS STREAM

This stream will provide up to \$127.2M in funding over four years starting in 2024. Eligible applicants could receive up to \$25M for their project and Transport Canada will fund up to 50% of the total eligible costs of a project. This program will fund recipients from both the private and public sectors, including provinces and territories, municipalities, Indigenous governments, for-profit organizations, not-for-profit organizations, and Canada Port Authorities.

The projects targeted by this stream are those involving onshore equipment and infrastructure in ports and terminals, including but not limited to:

- electrified or zero-emission port equipment available on the market (for example, electrified gantry cranes, cargo handling equipment)
- recharging infrastructure for electrified equipment and vessels, including shore power
- low carbon, zero-emission marine fuels, and bunkering infrastructure
- port-administered incentive programs offering discounts or rebates on port charges that favor the use of greener and/or low-emission vessels (domestic and international)
- studies that contribute to the implementation or adoption of emission-reducing equipment and infrastructure

This stream has an upcoming deadline of February 26, 2024, and all projects must be completed by March 31, 2028.



CLEAN VESSEL DEMONSTRATION STREAM

The objective of this stream is to provide funding for projects that advance the domestic marine industry's knowledge and capacity to transition to low-carbon vessels and zero-emission marine fuels and technology. Additionally, projects must target commercial vessels greater than 150 Gross Tons and be either Canadian-flagged or be operated predominately in Canadian waters by a Canadian entity.

This stream has a total budget of \$22.5M and will provide funding over 5 years, starting in 2023. Eligible applicants under this stream must be vessel owners and/or operators registered in Canada. It can be provinces and territories, Indigenous governments, municipalities, businesses, not-for-profit organizations, and Canada Port Authorities. Successful recipients can receive up to \$125,000 in funding or up to 50% of eligible project costs, whichever one is less.

Examples of projects eligible for this grant are:

- research, engineering, or feasibility studies required to determine the viability (or to support the design) of a ship demonstration project or elements of a ship demonstration project, before undertaking physical work or testing
- safety assessments that are used to identify risks/hazards/challenges, including mitigation measures needed to overcome barriers to the deployment of low-carbon and/or zero-emission ship technology and marine fuels for use on ships
- the development of safety codes and standards to facilitate the adoption of low-carbon and/or zero-emission ship technologies and marine fuels for use on vessels

Canada's Green Shipping Corridor Program marks a transformative step towards a more sustainable future for the marine industry. Through strategic investments and a commitment to innovation, Canada is navigating the waters of change, proving that economic growth and environmental stewardship can indeed sail toward a cleaner, greener horizon.

Safe Streets and Roads for All: What Has Been Funded and What to Expect in 2024

Joseph Phelan, Grants Development Consultant (Broadband, Transportation, & Utilities)

Among the major initiatives from the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Roadway Safety Strategy to eliminate roadway deaths continues to be Safe Streets and Roads for All. So far, \$1.7 billion has been allocated to communities in all 50 states and Puerto Rico. There remains \$2.3 billion as the DOT gears up for another round of funding with the application window expected to open in February.

Not every grant opportunity is as straight forward as **Safe Streets and Roads for All** with the sole purpose to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. Applicants can apply for two types of grants: planning and demonstration or implementation grants. Planning and Demonstration Grants can consist of developing, completing, or supplementing a comprehensive safety action plan, examples include:

- Timeline for eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries
- Create a task force to oversee the plan
- Provide a safety analysis of historical trends that provide a baseline level of crashes
- Private sector and community group collaboration
- Equity considerations
- Access current policies to identify opportunities to improve how processes prioritize transportation safety
- Comprehensive set of projects and strategies that are shaped by data, best available evidence, and noteworthy practices to address the safety problems described in the action plan
- Progress and transparency methods that measure progress over time after an action plan is developed or updated



Within the framework of an action plan, supplemental activities are eligible. These are meant to support or enhance an existing action plan, such as: topical safety sub-plans focused on speed management, vulnerable road users, accessibility for individuals with disabilities, health equity, among other key topics; road safety audits; additional safety analysis and expanded data collection, as examples.

Demonstration grants will fund various activities like feasibility studies; engineering studies that further safety applications of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Device; pilot programs for behavioral or operational activities; and technologies not yet fully adopted in the community like variable speed limits, technology for adaptive signal timing, adaptive lighting, Intelligent Transportation Systems, and vehicle-to-infrastructure technology.

The vast majority of awarded projects, over 1000, have been Planning and Demonstration Grants, but there have been 85 implementation projects awarded through two years of funding. These implementation grants have been infrastructure, behavioral, and operational safety activities identified in an action plan. The list of eligible projects is exhaustive, but here are three examples of awarded projects in 2023.



Applicant	Amount	Activities
Town of Hammonton, NJ	\$14.4 million	Implement crosswalk visibility enhancements, bicycle lanes, dedicated left- and right-turn lanes at intersections, corridor access management, and enhanced lighting to address numerous safety issue
City of Dallas, TX	\$21.8 million	Install bike lanes and implementing a road diet from five lanes to four, leading pedestrian intervals, raised crosswalks, and bus shelter improvements, among other safety enhancements
City of Madison, WI	\$6.2 million	Improve pedestrian, bicycle, and transit rider safety and accessibility with sidewalks, ADA ramps, median and pedestrian refuge islands, protected bike lanes, and traffic calming

Not much is expected to change when the new notice of funding opportunity is announced in February. Applicants are required to match at least 20 percent of the total project cost. Grants will range based on the project type with planning and demonstrating grants having a minimum cost of \$100,000 to a

maximum amount of \$10 million. Implementation grants must be between \$2.5 million and \$25 million. The project period is up to five years upon receiving the award.

Make sure to sign up for news alerts from DOT to ensure you will not miss when this program opens!

Program Snapshot

Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)



SUMMARY

The purpose of SS4A grants is to improve roadway safety by significantly reducing or eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries through safety action plan development and refinement and implementation focused on all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, motorists, personal conveyance and micromobility users, and commercial vehicle operators. The program provides funding to develop the tools to help strengthen a community's approach to roadway safety and save lives and is designed to meet the needs of diverse local, Tribal, and regional communities that differ dramatically in size, location, and experience administering Federal funding. The SS4A program provides funding for two types of grants: Planning and Demonstration Grants and Implementation Grants:

- **Planning and Demonstration Grants:** Planning and Demonstration Grants are used to develop, complete, or supplement a comprehensive safety action plan, as well as carry out demonstration activities that inform an Action Plan.
- **Implementation Grants:** Implementation Grants are used to implement strategies or projects that are consistent with an existing Action Plan and may also bundle funding requests for supplemental planning and demonstration activities that inform an Action Plan

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants are:

- Metropolitan planning organizations;
- Counties, cities, towns, and transit agencies or other special districts that are subdivisions of a State;
- Federally recognized Tribal governments; and
- Multijurisdictional groups comprised of the above entities

DEADLINE

Applications were to be submitted by July 10, 2023. Applications for the next round of SS4A are anticipated to open in February 2024.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A>

Funded Project Highlight

Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)

FUNDED ORGANIZATION

City of Fayetteville

PROJECT TITLE

“Safe Streets and Roads for Fayetteville, Arkansas - Accelerating Change Toward Vision Zero”

AMOUNT FUNDED

\$25,000,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

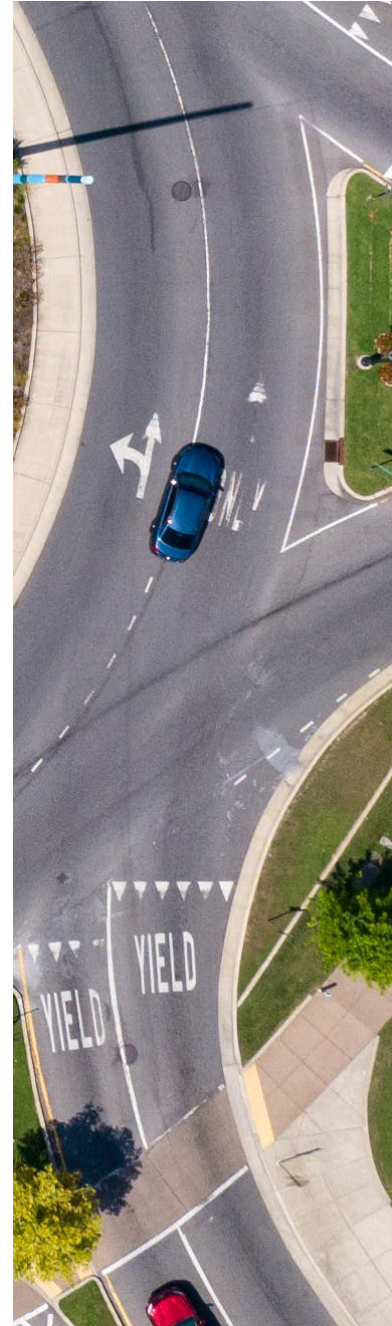
The City of Fayetteville is awarded funds to implement its Vision Zero strategy, which addresses safety problems in the City’s most critical transportation corridors. These roadways were constructed using outdated auto-oriented designs that invite high-speed driving and lack basic infrastructure for non-vehicular use. These roadways have been identified on Fayetteville’s high-injury network (HIN), which represents just 12% of Fayetteville’s roadway miles but accounts for 60% of killed and serious injury (KSI) crashes. This project will implement five major capital improvement projects on high-injury corridors, paired with a community-wide education and awareness campaign (funded as a supplemental planning and demonstration activity). The five major projects will implement Proven Safety Countermeasures including improved lighting and corridor access management; appropriate speed limits; roundabout installation; dedicated left- and right-turn lanes at intersections; and vulnerable road user countermeasures including raised medians, pedestrian refuge islands, road diets, sidewalks, bike lanes, rectangular rapid-flashing beacons, and crosswalk visibility enhancements.

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION

<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/ss4a/2023-full-award-list>

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE

<https://www.fayetteville-ar.gov/>



Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Broadband-Related Funding: Where are We Now and Where are We Going?

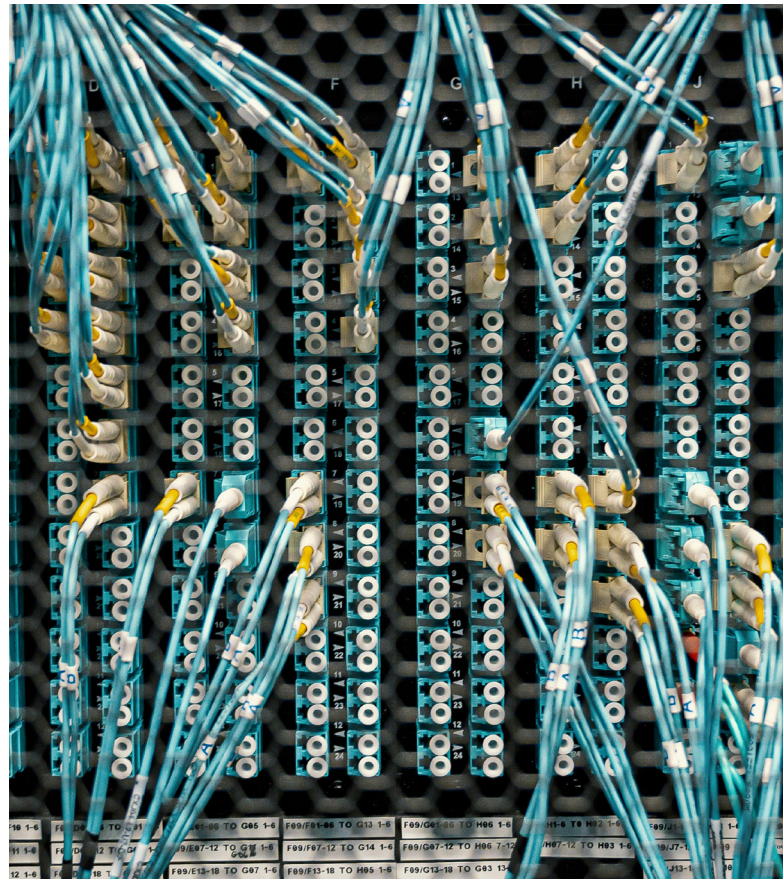
Dr. Liz Shay, Senior Grants Development Consultant

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), is historic legislation providing substantial amounts of funding towards a variety of infrastructure projects. Much of this funding goes to areas like transportation and clean energy, as well as training in emerging infrastructure-related fields, however, \$65 billion is going to broadband programs.

This funding was provided to the Department of Commerce and is being managed by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). It has been about 2.5 years since the enactment of the IIJA legislation so it is important to review where we are in the process of implementing these broadband-related initiatives and what next steps your organization should consider. In the following sections, we will cover the basics of the four relevant umbrella programs and their current status, from most to least implemented.

ENABLING MIDDLE MILE INFRASTRUCTURE

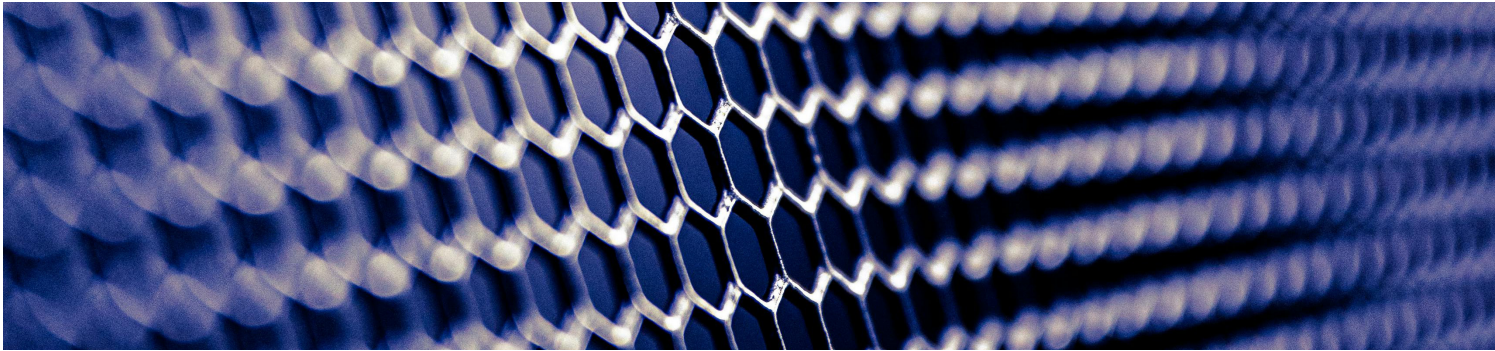
The **Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program** was created to meet the IIJA objective to encourage the expansion and extension of middle mile infrastructure to reduce the cost of connecting unserved and underserved areas and to promote broadband connection resiliency. The \$1 billion program opened in June 2022 with a September 2022 deadline. This technology-neutral, competitive program focused on funding entities to construct, improve, or acquire middle mile infrastructure. Preference was given for projects that leveraged existing rights-of-way, enabled connection to unserved anchor institutions, developed carrier-neutral interconnection facilities, and improved resiliency and reduced regulatory and permitting barriers.



The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) brought unprecedented levels of funding for broadband-related initiatives. There are several grant programs that are the result of this funding, with each program at a different stage of implementation. Now is the time for your organization to plan projects to submit to many of these grant programs.

In 2023, a total of 39 awards were made under this program, totaling about \$980 million in grant funding with a total project cost of almost \$1.9 billion. These projects are distributed across the United States, with the majority focused on areas with very high costs to deploying middle mile infrastructure. Awardees are a mixture of government entities, public-private partnerships and cooperative relationships, and communications companies. A map of awards can be found [here](#).

To date, there has been industry interest in an additional round of this program, but no additional funding provided in any appropriation bill from Congress. If you are interested in a middle mile project, consider talking with your Congressperson as well as your state broadband office.



TRIBAL CONNECTIVITY TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS

The **Tribal Broadband Connectivity Grant Program** was established under the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021. IIJA provided an additional \$2 billion for the program, which NTIA could use to distribute to eligible entities, including to projects originally proposed under the first round of the program. Along with this additional funding, the IIJA legislation also increased the timeline for applications and implementation of projects and allows for more pre-application costs. Between the original Consolidated Appropriations Act funding and part of the additional funding from IIJA, NTIA awarded almost \$1.87 billion to 226 projects under the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Grant Program Round 1. A map of those awards can be found [here](#).

Round 2 of the program opened in July 2023 with a deadline in March 2024. Like in the first round, tribal entities can apply for either broadband infrastructure deployment projects or broadband use and adoption projects. Broadband infrastructure deployment projects focus on the construction, improvement, replacement, extension, or acquisition of facilities and telecommunications equipment required to provide qualifying broadband service (including backhaul, middle and last mile networks, and submarine cable landing stations). Broadband use and adoption projects focus on affordable broadband projects, distance learning, telehealth, digital inclusion efforts (including digital equity planning and workforce development activities), and broadband adoption activities. NTIA is prioritizing awards to Federally Recognized Tribes that did not receive an award in Round 1, along with some prioritization amongst project types.

Anticipated funding for Round 2 will exhaust the available funding for the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Grant Program, so submit an application if possible. Future rounds of funding are unknown. If you are interested in a project to support your Tribe that will need more time to prepare an application, consider talking with your Congressman and your state broadband office. If your Tribe has already received funding, coordinate efforts for the implementation process to ensure maximum impact of the funding.

BROADBAND EQUITY, ACCESS & DEPLOYMENT PROGRAM (BEAD)

BEAD is the flagship broadband program of IIJA, with \$42.45 billion appropriated over the course of the program. The goal of the program is to close the availability gap to affordable, reliable, high-speed broadband. The program prioritizes connecting unserved locations (no access to at least 25 Mbps down/3 Mbps up), underserved locations (no access to at least 100 Mbps down/20 Mbps up), and community anchor institutions (without gigabit connections). All 50 states, as well as the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands will receive allocations based on their current coverage (amounts for each entity can be found [here](#)).

States and territories have submitted their Initial Proposals about how they will use the funds and NTIA is currently reviewing them for approval (Louisiana is the only state approved as of the time of writing). Once approved, states and territories can request up to 20% of their allocation to start doing certain BEAD activities, such as deploying broadband to areas with (1) at least 80% unserved locations and (2) are in a location in which the percentage of individuals with a household income at or below 150% of the poverty line applicable to a family of the size involved that is higher than the national percentage of such individuals. Simultaneously, states and territories will be working on their Final Proposals, due 12 months after their Initial Proposals are approved.

Currently, states and territories have not yet opened the regranting process, but we expect them to open over the next several months, with dates varying by state. Many broadband offices are already releasing some information about their plans, including their submitted Initial Proposals and at times other details about the eventual regranting process. Keep an eye on your state or territory's broadband office website for updates about timing. If appropriate, talk with them about your plans and their relevance to the goals of BEAD. Information about individual state broadband offices can be found [here](#).

DIGITAL EQUITY ACT PROGRAMS

IIJA appropriated \$2.75 billion to digital equity act programs designed to support the closure of the digital divide and to promote equity and digital inclusion. NTIA implemented three programs for these efforts: the **State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program**, the **State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program**, and the **Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program**.

As of right now, only the State Digital Equity Planning Grant program has made awards. In July 2022, states submitted applications to receive their planning funds. They are utilizing those funds to develop their digital equity plans. Once the State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program opens, states will submit their digital equity plans to NTIA for review and approval. States with approved plans will receive funds (amounts based on a formula) to implement those initiatives. In many cases, states will choose to regrant some or all of their State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program awards to organizations within their borders to implement relevant projects. NTIA is closing the public comment period for guidance for this program around the time of publication of this article.

The Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program will allow eligible organizations to apply directly to NTIA to implement efforts to achieve digital equity, promote digital inclusion activities, and spur greater adoption of broadband among underserved populations. Government entities, non-profit organizations, education providers, and others will be able to apply to receive funds. NTIA expects to open this program soon, likely at a similar time to when the State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program opens.

If your organization is interested in digital equity efforts, there are some things that you can do now. Contact your state digital equity planning committee and share your plans and how they will impact residents within your state's borders. A list of contacts to get started can be found [here](#). Most states have already posted their digital equity plans to allow for public comment, so review those plans and discuss with appropriate stakeholders about the relevance of your organization's efforts to those broader initiatives. If your planned project is likely to have a larger-scale impact, consider developing ideas and partnerships to eventually apply to the Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program.

STEPS YOUR ORGANIZATION CAN TAKE NOW

Regardless of what type of broadband-related project your organization would like to implement, now is a great time to plan for future grant application submissions. Here are a few things your organization can work on now to be ready when solicitations are released:

1. Familiarize yourself with NTIA

NTIA has many resources about specific programs, as well as helpful information for different types of organizations. Explore their website [here](#).

2. Get to know your state broadband office

State broadband offices will be managing some of these programs at the state level, so get to know their priorities and talk with them about what you have planned and its relevance to their broader goals. Check out links to individual state pages [here](#).

3. Understand the population you will impact

Review the demographics of your planned project participants and understand relevant alignment with the priorities of various programs. If you are doing a broadband implementation project, are you impacting unserved and/or underserved locations? If you are doing a digital equity project, are you impacting covered populations?

4. Form partnerships

For many of the projects that will be submitted to any of these IIJA broadband-related programs, partnerships will be essential to have well-rounded initiatives. Think about the expertise your organization already has and what you need to seek from external partners. Start those conversations now so that everyone is on the same page and initial planning efforts can take place prior to a solicitation being released.

5. Find a source for your matching funds

Most of these programs require a cost match from the grant recipient. Think about where you may be able to get this match from non-federal sources and ensure that you will have it in place in time for application submission.

Program Snapshot

State Digital Equity Grant Program

SUMMARY

The purpose of the State Digital Equity Grant Program is to promote the achievement of digital equity, support digital inclusion activities, and build capacity for efforts by States relating to the adoption of broadband by residents of those States. Subgrants will be made in support of the State's Digital Equity Plan and digital inclusion activities in the State generally.

The State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program supports the creation of community-centric solutions. It provides resources to community organizations to help scale digital literacy programs. These programs give people the skills they need to effectively use the internet. Funds will support projects that promote meaningful adoption and use of high-speed internet service. Projects should aim to help the following groups:

- Low-income households
- Aging populations
- Incarcerated individuals
- Veterans
- People with disabilities
- People with language barriers
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- Rural inhabitants

ELIGIBILITY

Each State is eligible to apply for grants under this program. The governor or equivalent official of an applicant State shall select an Administering Entity to receive and administer the State's grant funding. Separately, territories or possessions of the United States that are not defined as States, as well as Indian Tribes, Alaska Native entities, and Native Hawaiian organizations, are eligible to enter into grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts with NTIA to carry out the activities contemplated in this program.

DEADLINE

Applications for States were to be submitted by July 12, 2022. Applications for territories were to be submitted by January 17, 2023. The application date for State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program is to be announced.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.internetforall.gov/program/state-digital-equity-planning-grant-program>



Thinking About Using AI for Grant Writing? Read This First!

Elizabeth Evans, Manager of U.S. Operations



Ethical considerations around plagiarism and intellectual copywrite aside, if you are considering outsourcing your grant writing efforts to AI, we suggest caution. There are limits to what even the most innovative AI tool can produce on your behalf. However, to appreciate the need for this advice, it may help to first understand how text generative AI tools work.

BACKGROUND

AI programs (regardless of function) leverage machine learning to generate content using predictive algorithms. In order to facilitate the AI program's learning, developers feed the AI massive amounts of data which is then analyzed for patterns. The AI program, when fed a request, will output requested data using a predetermined set of rules based on identified patterns.

Did you know that you're using AI when you use a GPS?

If to ask your GPS to find you the fastest route to a venue and it presents 2 options, one of which is 2mins faster – the GPS program is looking not only at miles on a map but also historical traffic patterns for the time of day, and possibly even weather or other roadway conditions when calculating estimates.

In the case of text generative AI tools, part of that machine learning also involves figuring out how to mirror natural human language so as to make the output data more useful. By making use of iterative feedback from users on what does or does not sound appropriate, eventually - over time, the program improves

its written output. That said, the output can only ever be as good as the data originally fed into the AI as part of its 'learning.'

Text generative AI programs do not have the capability for new or unique thoughts. Therefore, while definitionally "AI" may stand for "Automated Intelligence," it may be better to instead think of it as "Automated Imitation." This imitation limitation presents an obvious challenge for those who may wish to 'offload' the grant writing process completely to a text generative AI tool.

Grant funders want to know the specifics of your proposed project and how it aligns with their unique reasons for offering the grant opportunity in the first place.

Unless the AI tool you're leveraging has been fed the relevant data points, all it can do is regurgitate generic statements (or worse, content that might contradict your aims because the AI code has learned that particular output is the average user's desired response).

You do not need to just take our word on the boundaries of AI though, we can show you what we mean. The following is a Letter of Intent produced by ChatGPT 3.5 after being fed the prompt, "We are a hospital looking for grant funding for cybersecurity hardware and software. Please write an LOI or Letter of Intent for our application."

ORIGINAL AI OUTPUT LETTER OF INTENT

Dear [Grantor's Name],

I am writing on behalf of [Your Hospital Name] to express our intent to apply for federal grant funding to enhance our cybersecurity infrastructure. As a healthcare facility committed to safeguarding sensitive patient information and maintaining the integrity of our systems, we recognize the critical importance of robust cybersecurity measures.

Project Overview:

Our proposed project aims to strengthen our hospital's cybersecurity framework through the acquisition and implementation of state-of-the-art hardware and software solutions. This initiative aligns with national priorities to bolster the security of healthcare institutions, ensuring the confidentiality and privacy of patient data.

Objectives:

1. Upgrade and implement advanced cybersecurity hardware to fortify our network against potential threats.
2. Deploy cutting-edge software solutions to detect, prevent, and respond to cyber threats effectively.
3. Provide comprehensive staff training programs to enhance awareness and adherence to cybersecurity best practices.

Need and Impact:

The increasing frequency and sophistication of cyber threats pose a significant risk to healthcare organizations. By securing this grant, [Your Hospital Name] aims to mitigate these risks, safeguard patient data, and ensure uninterrupted healthcare services for our community. The proposed cybersecurity enhancements will contribute to the overall resilience of our hospital's information systems.

Budget Overview:

An estimated [Proposed Budget Amount] is allocated for the acquisition, installation, and training associated with the cybersecurity hardware and software. A detailed budget breakdown will be provided upon request during the formal application process.

Conclusion:

We are enthusiastic about the opportunity to strengthen our cybersecurity infrastructure and are confident that this project will have a lasting positive impact on the security and resilience of [Your Hospital Name]. We look forward to the possibility of working collaboratively with [Grantor's Organization] to ensure the success of this endeavor.

Thank you for considering our Letter of Intent. We anticipate the opportunity to submit a comprehensive grant application and welcome any additional guidance or information required for the application process.

Sincerely,



We passed the AI-generated letter around to several veteran team members at Grants Office for their thoughts on how the AI tool did. Below, in no particular rank order, are the top five shortcomings identified with this letter.

- “The AI’s opening paragraph lacked a data-driven, compelling reason to keep reading in the first paragraph. What is at risk without this funder’s support?”
- “The letter was highly repetitive without adding additional details or information. Reviewers have a lot of requests to get through and just because you are allowed a full page does not mean you should use it. Funders appreciate those that can provide all the necessary information to make a decision quickly.”
- “Overall, there was a lack of detail about the applicant organization besides their name – for instance: what kind of healthcare facility is the applicant, where are they located, who do they serve, etc.?”
- “The AI was unable to generate a reason why this unique funder should care about the request and how the proposed efforts align with the foundation’s purpose for offering funds.”
- “The AI did not include a specific ask of the funder other than to submit a full proposal. A grant maker is going to want to know your specific monetary ask and how much that is relative to the total project cost.”

That said, while the AI-generated letter missed the mark on its own, it does still have value. The AI-generated letter correctly

notes the hardware and software needs and even goes as far as to add in team training (a great idea!). It also conveys the hope to be invited to submit a full application. So, if you are suffering from writers’ block, AI generated text can be a great way to move past the initial “blank page” hurdle.

For some, it is easier to edit another’s words before crafting something from their own voice. The text-generative AI tool’s output can provide you with a starting point to write your next Letter of Intent or grant proposal draft. Three key items to check for when editing:

- Are the correct names (grant opportunity, funder, applicant and partner organizations, key personnel) utilized in the response?
- Does the content include sufficient specificity, and is all the required information present in the response?
- Are all data points referenced truthful and citable?

Beyond editing the document for accuracy, there may also be word or character limitations to consider. While reworking the content for length, consider there may be better, more compelling word choices to help your request stand out or more strongly resonate with the funder. For instance, you may wish to mirror key phrases from the grant funder’s website or grant solicitation to imply a strong connection between their reason for offering funds and your proposed effort.

To exemplify this technique, the following is our rework of the AI-generated letter.

HUMAN-EDITED VERSION OF AI-OUTPUT LETTER OF INTENT

Dear [Grantor's Name],

I am writing on behalf of [Your Hospital Name] to express our interest in applying for your [Name of Grant] to enhance our cybersecurity infrastructure. As a rural healthcare facility committed to safeguarding sensitive patient information and maintaining the integrity of our systems, we recognize the critical importance of robust cybersecurity measures. Particularly as more and more of our community members in [Region] seek engagement through telehealth appointments and the healthcare industry has risen to be the number two target for cyberattack within the US ([Check Point Research, 2023](#)).

Our proposed project aims to strengthen our hospital's cybersecurity framework through the acquisition and implementation of state-of-the-art networking hardware and cybersecurity software solutions. In addition, we will also encourage awareness of cyber-threats and adherence to cybersecurity best practices through provision of comprehensive staff training programs and patient education outreach. The proposed cybersecurity enhancements will contribute to the overall resilience of our hospital's information systems.

We believe the proposed initiative strongly aligns with your organization's priorities [Must be Customized to the Specific Grantor's Mission/Grant Program Purpose]. The increasing frequency and sophistication of cyber threats pose a significant risk to healthcare organizations and can add undue stress to patients and their families. By securing this grant, [Your Hospital Name] will be better positioned to mitigate these risks, safeguard patient data, and ensure uninterrupted healthcare services for our community.

An estimated [Total Project Amount] is required for the acquisition, installation, and staff/patient education associated with this effort. Of that amount, we humbly request your investment of [Specific Amount Requested via this Grant] towards this effort. A detailed budget breakdown and timeline of major project milestones will be provided upon request during the formal application process.

We are enthusiastic about the opportunity to strengthen our cybersecurity infrastructure and are confident that this project will have a lasting positive impact on the security and resilience of [Your Hospital Name]. We look forward to the possibility of working collaboratively with [Grantor's Organization] to ensure the success of this endeavor.

Thank you for considering our Letter of Interest. We eagerly await the opportunity to submit a comprehensive grant application and speak with you more about our potential partnership.

Sincerely,

Data in Education: How it is used and how it can be helpful in Grantseeking

**Christina Fernandez, Grants Development
Consultant (K-12 Education)**

Data serves as a powerful lens through which educators and administrators gain insights into student performance, learning patterns, and overall educational effectiveness. From traditional classrooms to online platforms, institutions are increasingly relying on data to make informed decisions on how to enhance curriculum and provide targeted learning experiences for students. Data can be collected in many ways such as surveys, assessment scores, focus groups, and more depending on the type of project being implemented. In this article, I will be exploring the multifaceted role of data in education and dive into how educational institutions can harness this powerful tool for successful grant seeking.

THE ROLE OF DATA IN EDUCATION

In education, data collection has become an integral part of assessing student performance, enhancing teaching methodologies, and shaping educational policies. For example, The No Child Left Behind Act, enacted in 2002, ushered in a new era of accountability in education. The Act significantly impacted data collection in K-12 education by mandating standardized testing to measure student proficiency. It also required schools to collect and report on how their low-income and minority students were performing to identify achievement gaps and implement targeted interventions at Title I schools. While the act faced criticism, it undeniably heightened the significance of data in education, setting the stage for a more transparent and outcome-focused approach to teaching and learning.

Unbeknownst to us, that stage would be the COVID-19 pandemic, which has also been marked as a pivotal moment for educational data collection. We saw a shift in the amount of data that was being collected across all educational institutions. Institutions were required to gather more up-to-date information on student attendance (virtually and in person), student access to technology, quality of online content, retention, and a variety of other data points. Institutions began to rely on data so that they could better monitor student engagement/progress and identify learning gaps that were being exacerbated by the digital



divide. Having this information has allowed many institutions to better tailor their support services to their most high-need students. This data is still critical in helping institutions decide how to spend their remaining relief funds best.

This unprecedented event has not only left a mark on the education system as a whole but has also propelled the use of educational technology and the collection of educational data. With the adoption of more “smart” classrooms and other “smart” learning environments, institutions are now able to collect real-time data on student engagement, preferences (including social and emotional indicators), and performance. Additionally, artificial intelligence, machine learning, and data analytics are getting ready to completely revolutionize how educational data is gathered, processed, and utilized. As education continues to evolve, data collection will play an increasingly dynamic role, not only in assessing student progress but also in fostering a more inclusive and effective learning environment.

THE ROLE OF DATA IN GRANTSEEKING

As we can see, the influence of data on education goes beyond individual classrooms and has been used to shape policies that help meet the needs of students. It can also be used as a powerful tool when applying for grants. Including data in your grant application is going to be critical when putting together a compelling application. By putting together a comprehensive project backed by relevant data, institutions can effectively

Some popular sources for education data are the National Student Clearinghouse and National Center for Education Statistics.

communicate the significance of their proposed projects and help paint a picture for grant funders. It can help highlight the potential for positive change and emphasize a project's alignment with the grant maker's vision. This strategic use of data not only enhances the proposal's persuasiveness but also establishes a clear connection between the institution's objectives and the funder's mission, ultimately enhancing the chances of securing funding.

Not only is data going to be a necessary component in a proposal narrative, but it is also going to play a significant role in the post-award stage of a grant cycle. This is referred to as a monitoring or evaluation plan. These plans are often required by grant funders as a way to assess the effectiveness, impact, and overall success of a grant-funded project. Within a grant application, it is required to define metrics for success and describe how data will be collected (internally or externally). Defining these

Each project activity and goal should have its own set of intended outputs (quantitative) and outcomes (qualitative). Using a logic model can help visualize what data should be collected and why.

metrics will help determine the type of data that will need to be collected to best showcase project results and impact. Collecting data throughout the project will also allow project teams to make mid-course corrections to ensure the project is staying on course to meet the initial goals and objectives.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, data has changed the way we approach teaching and learning. By effectively utilizing educational data, institutions can not only enhance the quality of education but also position themselves as strong candidates for grants. The role of data in both education and grantseeking serves as a driving force in making informed, evidence-based decisions that can lead to systemic educational change.





Grants Office launches the first edition of “The Global Grant Funding Landscape, 2023-2025”, written by our global team of grants intelligence experts.

This analysis aims to provide business, government, and institutional leaders with a broader recognition and appreciation for the global outlook of grant funding in the years ahead.

INSIGHTS TO BE GAINED:

- How much grant funding is available around the world?
- What countries have the most money available?
- What organizations are receiving and spending these grant dollars?
- What is the source of these grant dollars in each country?
- How much funding is available through short-term stimulus packages and how much will continue beyond 2025?

Full analysis and additional resources available [HERE](#).

**Happy 2024 from the Grants Office team.
We're so grateful for each other and all of you!**



Recent Grantscasts

New events are added weekly. Visit <https://www.grantsoffice.com/Grants-Intelligence/Grantcasts> for the most updated information and to see our entire library of global Grantscasts.

Keeping Students Safe: Enhance Your School's Security Capabilities with COPS SVPP

A Grants Office Production (United States), sponsored by Genetec

About: Since 1994, the Department of Justice has invested over \$14 billion in community policing efforts through the Community Oriented Policing Services, or COPS, office. With the threat of violent incidents at our nation's schools, how can this funding help support school districts and law enforcement agencies better protect our schools? If you are interested in utilizing security technology to enhance your school's security, you don't want to miss this event! Included with your registration is a FREE workbook guiding you through the application process of the COPS School Violence Prevention Program grant, access to the FREE Genetec Grants Support Program, and access to view and download the presentation slides and a recording of the webinar.

[Access HERE](#)

Keeping Students Safe: Enhance Your Campus's Security Capabilities with Campus OVW

A Grants Office Production (United States), sponsored by Genetec

About: Technology is an essential piece of a comprehensive security plan for colleges and universities. As institutions are tasked with investing in intelligent security cameras, unified access control systems, and other technology solutions to expand campus safety personnel's capabilities, they are also finding that financing these solutions can be challenging. If you are interested in utilizing security technology to enhance your institution's environment, you don't want to miss this event! Included with your registration is a FREE workbook guiding you through the application process of the Office on Violence Against Women grant, access to the FREE Genetec Grants Support Program, and access to view and download the presentation slides and a recording of the webinar.

[Access HERE](#)

View our entire library of FREE upcoming and recent Grantscasts online in our [Grantscast Library](#).

DID YOU KNOW... GRANTS OFFICE IS GLOBAL?

Our team of grants experts in the United States, Canada, Europe, and Australia, are ready to support your global grant needs.

Nonmarket

Market



USA:
grantsoffice.com
info@grantsoffice.com

CANADA:
grantsofficecan.com
CanadaHelpdesk@grantsoffice.com

AUSTRALIA:
grantsoffice.com.au
AustraliaHelpdesk@grantsoffice.com

EUROPE:
grantsoffice.eu
EuropeHelpdesk@grantsoffice.com