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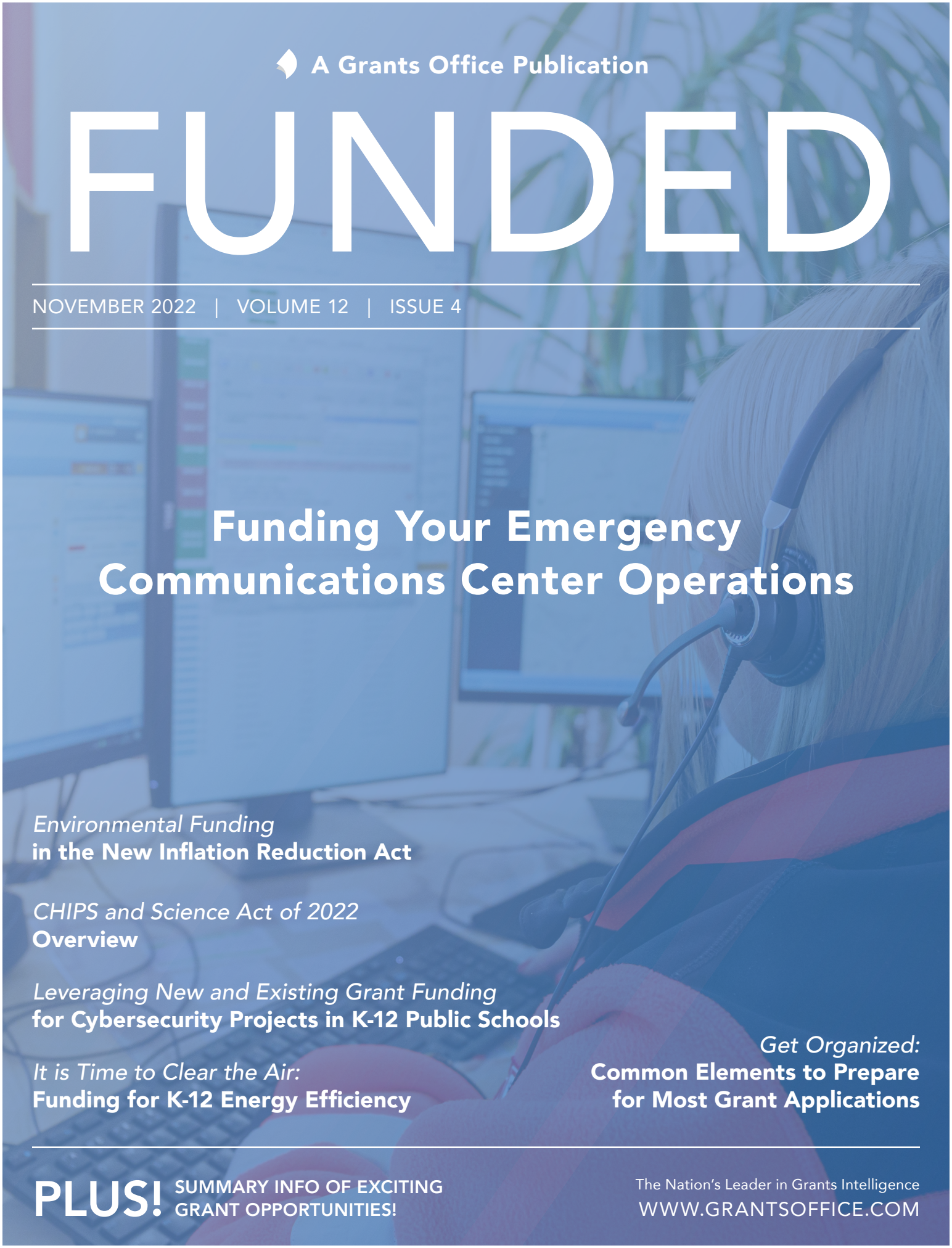

Funding Your Emergency Communications Center Operations

Environmental Funding
in the New Inflation Reduction Act

CHIPS and Science Act of 2022
Overview

Leveraging New and Existing Grant Funding
for Cybersecurity Projects in K-12 Public Schools

It is Time to Clear the Air:
Funding for K-12 Energy Efficiency

Get Organized:
Common Elements to Prepare for Most Grant Applications

PLUS! SUMMARY INFO OF EXCITING GRANT OPPORTUNITIES!

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

DEAR READERS,

This issue of *FUNDED* is even more eclectic than you may be accustomed to, with funding news and tips ranging from emergency communications to semiconductor production grants. But as always, we've worked hard to make sure the information we are providing is *useful* and *actionable* for those who may be eligible.

We begin with **Shannon Day** taking us through some of the top funding sources that are available for **public safety emergency communications and operations centers**, two critical areas where historical shortfalls in funding have slowed the pace of modernization over the past two decades. Then we move on to **environmental funding**, with highlights of a range of environmental programs in the Inflation Reduction Act provided by **Chris Barnes**.

On the education front, **Liz Shay** kicks off a trio of great articles with an analysis of the new **CHIPS and Science Act** (it's not all semiconductors). **Max Cassity** follows up on that with coverage of **K-12 cybersecurity funding** and an upcoming opportunity that finally promises to provide a focus on cyber to enable schools to protect themselves and their students from hacking and cyber-attacks.

Patrick Riedy closes the education portion of this month's issue with a look at several useful programs that support **energy efficiency upgrades for K-12 schools**. Whether you're looking to save money on energy costs long-term or just trying to fund the replacement of a 70-year-old boiler, these programs may be able to help.

Sydney Stapleton wraps things up with a level-setting survey of the **most common elements funders require** in grant proposals. Experienced grantwriters will recognize these elements immediately, and newcomers will certainly become acquainted with these aspects as they develop more proposals.

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,
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FUNDING YOUR EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER OPERATIONS

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

911 has been the number we call when we witness a crime, experience a car accident, have a broken arm or a burst appendix, and more, since it was established as the national emergency telephone number in 1968.

When we need help, we expect someone on the other end of the line will provide it. Most of us, however, do not know or care how these emergency operations are funded.

Historically, 911, Emergency Communications Center (ECC), and Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) operations have relied on funding from local sources like tax revenue and landline surcharges. Over the past two decades, the shift from landline to wireless communications has delivered 911 centers a one-two punch. Fewer landlines mean less revenue, and less reliable location information. PSAPs are now facing a need to upgrade technology in order to track the location of wireless callers with less funding.

In 2018, a federal grant program provided $109 million[i] to help counties implement Next Generation 911 (NG911) technology upgrades. While this funding helped, the country has fallen far short of the goal of shifting to NG911 by 2020.

> The nationwide shift to NG911 is behind schedule and underfunded.

Over the past two years, the push for additional federal grant funding to help bring the country's underfunded 911 centers into the 21st century has been met with roadblocks, including a global pandemic and worldwide economic downturn. Organizations lobbying Congress for funding have not given up the fight. In September, members from a coalition of public safety representatives, including the National Emergency Number Association (NENA)[ii], contacted members of Congress to express an urgent need for an additional $10 billion in federal funding. On September 29th, a continuing resolution vote (CR) approved the extension of FCC auction authority through December 16th, 2022. While funding has not yet been approved, this extension allows time for further debate on the issue.[iii]

Managers of emergency communications centers have proven to be extremely resourceful and have come to expect repeated funding delays. As a result, managers turn to other avenues of funding to keep operations running.

The American Rescue Plan injected $350 billion into state and local economies through the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund. The U.S. Treasury, in their Final Rule, acknowledged that these funds may be used for the provision of government services, including "police, fire, and other public safety services."[iv] The Biden Administration took this one step further in May by committing $10 billion in ARP funding to public safety. The president lauded communities who invested some of their ARP funding in improving public safety, like Mercer County, PA; Jonesboro, AK; and Trenton, NJ, who all used funds to improve radio communications, update 911 center technology, and increase employee pay rates.[v]

Numerous states, including Alabama, New York, and New Mexico, also provide annual 911 grant funding. Creative thinkers have also sought out funding through public safety partnerships with emergency operations centers (Emergency Management Performance Grant), police (Byrne Justice Assistance Grant), or fire (Assistance to Firefighters Grant) or through community partnerships with local foundations.

Until the nation's 911 infrastructure receives a direct federal funding boost, emergency communications center managers will continue finding creative ways to keep answering the phones.

---

i. Departments of Commerce and Transportation announce $109 million in grants to modernize 911 services for states and Tribal Nations. U.S. Department of Transportation. (2019, August 9). Retrieved September 27, 2022, from https://www.transportation.gov/briefing-room/departments-commerce-and-transportation-announce-109-million-grants-modernize-911

ii. Nena provides input on proposed NG911 funding. Urgent Comms. (2022, September 18). Retrieved September 27, 2022, from https://urgentcomm.com/2022/09/09/nena-provides-input-on-proposed-ng911-funding/

iii. Stopgap funding bill would grant temporary FCC auction authority, leave NG911 funding in limbo. Urgent Comms. (2022, September 29). Retrieved September 30, 2022, from https://urgentcomm.com/2022/09/28/stopgap-funding-bill-would-grant-temporary-fcc-auction-authority-leave-ng911-funding-in-limbo/

iv. Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Final rule. Federal Register. U.S. Department of the Treasury. (2022, January 27). Retrieved September 27, 2022, from https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2022-01-27/pdf/2022-00292.pdf

v. Fact sheet: President Biden issues call for state and local leaders to dedicate more American rescue plan funding to make our communities safer – and deploy these dollars quickly. The White House. The United States Government. (2022, May 16). Retrieved September 27, 2022, from https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/13/fact-sheet-president-biden-issues-call-for-state-and-local-leaders-to-dedicate-more-american-rescue-plan-funding-to-make-our-communities-safer-and-deploy-these-dollars-quickly/

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER (EOC) GRANT PROGRAM

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Grant Program is intended to improve emergency management and preparedness capabilities by supporting flexible, sustainable, secure, strategically located, and fully interoperable EOCs with a focus on addressing identified deficiencies and needs. Fully capable emergency operations facilities at the State and local levels are an essential element of a comprehensive national emergency management system and are necessary to ensure continuity of operations and continuity of government in major disasters or emergencies caused by any hazard.

The objective of the FY 2022 EOC Grant Program is to improve EOC operations by funding the EOC projects included in Appendix A of this funding notice. These projects fund equipping, upgrading, and/or construction of emergency operations centers to provide fully capable facilities to ensure continuity of operations and continuity of government in major disasters or emergencies.

ELIGIBILITY

Only State Administrative Agencies (SAAs) (on behalf of state and local units of government) and Tribal governments with identified projects in Appendix A of the funding notice are eligible to apply.

DEADLINE

Applications were to be submitted by June 13, 2022. A similar deadline is anticipated, annually.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://www.fema.gov/km/node/636023#:~:text=The%20Emergency%20Operations%20Center%20%28EOC%29%20Grant%20Program%20is,a%20focus%20on%20addressing%20identified%20deficiencies%20and%20needs

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER GRANT PROGRAM (EOCGP)

FUNDED PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

FUNDED ORGANIZATION
City of Sedona

PROJECT TITLE
Sedona Emergency Operations Center

AMOUNT FUNDED
$900,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Police Remodel and Renovations. The current police station was never designed as a critical, 24-hour public safety facility and the increased police personnel, equipment, and workspace needed to serve a growing community and destination have outgrown the current facility design and footprint. This funding will expedite the renovation and remodeling of the existing public safety facility to meet the needs of the Sedona police department and serve as a small emergency operations center (EOC).

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION
https://www.sinema.senate.gov/sinema-kelly-secure-major-arizona-investments-annual-budget-bill

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE
https://www.sedonaaz.gov/

ENVIRONMENTAL FUNDING IN THE NEW INFLATION REDUCTION ACT

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

The recently passed Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) is a $740 billion investment by the federal government to combat climate change. Included in this legislation are incentives for electric vehicle manufacturers, investments in clean energy, and environmental restoration. Some of these incentives come in the form of tax credits for consumers and industry manufacturers. The IRA also creates new funding opportunities for governments and non-profits to address the harmful effects of climate change in their communities and to improve their ability to withstand future environmental disruptions.

Some of the grant programs contained in the IRA dovetail with the Biden administration's priorities around addressing climate change and environmental justice. For instance, from their first week in office, the administration has made it a priority to address environmental justice, ensuring that more resources are funneled to the under-resourced communities that often bear the brunt of the disastrous effects of climate change. The White House estimates that around $60 billion in the IRA is dedicated to funding environmental justice efforts. Billions more will go to other sectors, such as wind and power industries.

Depending on the program, these new funding opportunities will be open to governments, non-profits, institutes of higher education, and private industry. While it will likely be several months into 2023 before these programs begin to open, it is not too early to begin familiarizing yourself with some of the major latest programs contained in this legislation.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE JUSTICE BLOCK GRANTS

One of these recent programs is the Environmental and Climate Justice Block Grant program. This $3 billion program will provide funds to local governments, Indian tribes, institutes of higher education, and community-based nonprofits for community-led pollution monitoring, prevention, and remediation efforts and to support investments in low- and zero-emission technologies. These funds can also be used for workforce development activities and to support community engagement in state and federal policymaking.

Funding for this program is designed to ensure that community-based organizations have a role to play in projects that will help mitigate climate change in their communities. A new EPA office, the Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights, will likely be in charge of this program and other funding that will be delivered to disadvantaged communities across the country.

NEIGHBORHOOD ACCESS AND EQUITY GRANT PROGRAM

Another program designed to address environmental justice is the Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program administered by the Department of Transportation. This is a $3 billion competitive grant program designed to improve the walkability, safety, and access to affordable transportation in under-resourced communities. Out of this $3 billion, $1.262 billion is set aside for disadvantaged communities to use for those improvements.

This program complements another new program out of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program, which provides $1 billion in funding to reconnect communities cut off by transportation infrastructure, such as highway overpasses. The hope is that reducing these infrastructure barriers will create additional economic development opportunities in these historically disadvantaged communities.

GRANTS TO REDUCE AIR POLLUTION AT PORTS

The IRA also creates a new grant program designed to reduce air pollution at ports. Through a mixture of grants and rebates, this program will provide funds to purchase or install zero-emission port equipment or technology. Funds can also be used for planning and permitting activities related to these electrification initiatives or to develop a climate action plan. $2.25 billion will be available for governments, port authorities, or private entities that work with ports. An additional $750 million will be available for nonattainment areas.

The IIJA has also provided funding to assist with reducing pollution at ports, specifically through the creation of the Reduction of Truck Emissions at Port Facilities to assist with port electrification and efficiency projects. It also provided additional funds for the Port Infrastructure Development Program Grant, which also supports port electrification and greenhouse gas emission reduction.

LOOKING AHEAD

As I mentioned, it will likely be late in 2023 before many of these programs begin to open. It will take time for staff to be brought onboard and for guidance to be written. In the meantime, you and your organization can closely monitor the different federal agency websites for latest information about these programs. Pre-NOFO webinars or requests for information can be excellent ways to stay on top of new developments with these programs as we wait for guidance to officially be released.

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IMPROVING UNDERGRADUATE STEM EDUCATION (IUSE): EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

Through the NSF Improving Undergraduate STEM Education (IUSE) initiative, the NSF supports the highest caliber of undergraduate STEM education practice through a Foundation-wide framework of investments. The IUSE: EHR is a core NSF STEM education program that seeks to promote novel, creative, and transformative approaches to generating and using new knowledge about STEM teaching and learning to improve STEM education for undergraduate students.

The NSF places a high value on educating students to be leaders and innovators in emerging and rapidly changing STEM fields as well as educating a scientifically literate public. In pursuit of this goal, IUSE: EHR supports projects that seek to bring recent advances in STEM knowledge into undergraduate education, that adapt, improve, and incorporate evidence-based practices into STEM teaching and learning, and that lay the groundwork for institutional improvement in STEM education. In addition to innovative work at the frontier of STEM education, this program also encourages replication of research studies at different types of institutions and with different student bodies to produce deeper knowledge about the effectiveness and transferability of findings. IUSE: EHR also seeks to support projects that have high potential for broader societal impacts, including improved diversity of students and instructors participating in STEM education, professional development for instructors to ensure adoption of new and effective pedagogical techniques that meet the changing needs of students, and projects that promote institutional partnerships for collaborative research and development.

ELIGIBILITY

The program is open to application from all institutions of higher education and associated organizations.

DEADLINE

Applications for Level 1 and Capacity-Building proposals are to be submitted by January 18, 2023. Similar deadlines are anticipated, annually.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://beta.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/improving-undergraduate-stem-education-education

IMPROVING UNDERGRADUATE STEM EDUCATION (IUSE): EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES

FUNDED PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

FUNDED ORGANIZATION
Rochester Institute Of Technology (Inc)

PROJECT TITLE
Pencil Puzzles as an Inclusive Domain for Learning Computer Science Concepts

AMOUNT FUNDED
$474,064.00

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Computer science includes abstract, high-level concepts as well as concrete details, such as the proper arrangement of code. As a result, teaching computer science is particularly challenging. Pencil puzzles show promise for learning computer science, as well as for promoting critical and computational thinking and problem solving. This project builds on a previous analysis that demonstrated the effectiveness of pencil puzzles in introductory computer programming courses. It aims to extend the assessment to multiple course levels and to multiple institutions that have different characteristics and student demographics. Pencil puzzles are diagrams that pose a problem that humans solve through deduction, using only a pencil. Most pencil puzzles are language and culture independent, giving them broad potential as a teaching and learning tool. The use of pencil puzzles to teach computer science principles has the potential to broaden participation in computing. This project seeks to provide insights into the puzzles' effects on learning, engagement of diverse populations, suitability for both K-12 and upper division computational thinking courses, and value to instructors as pedagogical tools. The study intends to include a population of deaf and hard-of-hearing students and aims to provide insight into the suitability of the puzzles for this group of students. The project aims to contribute to the growth and diversity of the national computing workforce.

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION
https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward?AWD_ID=1821459&HistoricalAwards=false

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE
www.rit.edu

CHIPS AND SCIENCE ACT OF 2022 OVERVIEW

By: Liz Shay
Senior Grants Development Consultant, Higher Education

The CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 (H.R. 4346), signed into law on August 9, 2022, seeks to build the competitiveness of the United States on the global stage for several in-demand high-technology fields. The legislation is composed of a mixture of new appropriations and authorizations of appropriations for fiscal years 2023-2027, adding up to approximately $280 billion in total. Authorizations are used to indicate the intent of Congress to appropriate these funds in future budgets, but there is a possibility that the amounts of the appropriations will change once the relevant fiscal year budgets are passed. Understanding these authorizations can help with future planning for organizations who might eventually receive funding under one or more of the programs included in the bill.

A sizable portion of the funding from the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 will go to semiconductor manufacturers and other businesses. There will also be quite a bit of funding that will go to research organizations, education, and training providers (including both K-12 and higher education schools), and workforce development entities. The grant programs that will ultimately be created or expanded with this funding will be for key technology focus areas such as artificial intelligence, biomanufacturing, engineering biology, quantum information science, and related fields.

In the following sections, we will explore the appropriations and authorizations for appropriations within the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022, with a particular focus on funding that is relevant for public sector and nonprofit organizations. Please keep in mind that most of this funding will not be appropriated until fiscal year 2023 or beyond but planning now can help your organization prepare to respond to future solicitations. Even in cases where the eventual appropriation amounts may differ, the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 will likely influence priorities at federal agencies for these years.

CREATING HELPFUL INCENTIVES TO PRODUCE SEMICONDUCTORS (CHIPS) ACT

The first section of the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 is focused on the actual CHIPS Act. This is the main section where new appropriations have already been made as part of the bill, rather than just authorizations of appropriations. Most of the funding from this section (about $39 billion over the next few years) will go to the Financial Assistance Program. Eligible entities receive incentives to invest in facilities and equipment in the United States for semiconductor development and production. These recipients will also need to coordinate with education and training providers to implement workforce training opportunities.

What is more relevant to research organizations and education and training providers, is the available funding directly for their work. Authorizations of appropriations are included for advanced microelectronics research and development. The National Science Foundation (NSF) will also receive $200 million spread over the next few years for microelectronics workforce development and research activities. The NSF may choose to make new grant programs specifically for these activities, or they may include specific set-asides in existing grant programs for microelectronics-specific projects. In fact, we are already seeing the start of the impact of this legislation, with NSF releasing funding for semiconductor research activities at institutes of higher education.

The CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 includes authorizations of appropriations to support research, education, and workforce development programs for in-demand high-technology STEM fields.

SCIENCE FUNDING

The bulk of the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 funding relevant for public sector and nonprofit organizations comes from the section on science. This part of the legislation is devoted to innovation for those in-demand high-technology fields of interest. The bulk of the focus is on the Department of Energy (DOE), National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and the NSF, with some smaller components described for other federal agencies. All funding discussed in this section are authorizations of appropriations, so actual appropriations will come in the fiscal years 2023-2027 federal budgets. It is possible that the appropriations will change or not happen, but this section describes the intentions of Congress.

The CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 authorizes appropriations to DOE for science of the future. Most of this funding is intended for energy-related research and environmental sciences efforts. There is also funding for technology-related research, such as advanced scientific computing (including graduate student fellowships) and quantum network infrastructure. To help facilitate this work, there are also authorizations of appropriations for the Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR), an existing annual program that supports research capacity building in states and territories with relatively low DOE research funding. Outside of research, the Act specifically mentions interest in increased collaboration between teachers and scientists. Although the funding amount for this program is not known at this point, Congress wants to see more collaboration between and among teachers at elementary schools and secondary schools with students and faculty at institutes of higher education and National Laboratories. Part of the goals of this program will be to expand the number of individuals from underrepresented groups attaining skills and degrees in fields relevant to the DOE.

NIST has authorizations of appropriations for their entire anticipated budget for fiscal years 2023-2027 included in the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022. If these appropriations are made in the upcoming annual budget, then NIST will receive almost $1.6 billion for fiscal year 2023. Most of these funds will be used for scientific and technical research and services laboratory activities. There will also be funds set aside for construction and maintenance of NIST facilities. There are some plans for programs that will be relevant to public sector and nonprofit organizations though. NIST is expected to support research in engineering biology, biometrology, software security, advanced communications, and artificial intelligence. The CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 legislation also notes the establishment of the Dr. David Satcher Cybersecurity Education Grant Program, which will assist institutions of higher education that have an enrollment of needy students, including minority-serving institutions (MSIs), to establish or expand cybersecurity programs. We must wait until the appropriations are made and NIST releases guidance to know the details of this program, but it will likely be an opportunity for schools to build capacity for this high-demand field.

The biggest impact for public sector and nonprofit organizations in the CHIPS and Science of 2022 is the authorizations of appropriations for NSF. Assuming these appropriations are implemented in the fiscal year 2023 budget, NSF will receive nearly $11.9 billion for that year, an almost 35% increase over the fiscal year 2022 appropriation. A sizable portion of this funding will go to research and related activities, including the Mid-Scale Research Infrastructure Program which supports expensive, shared-use equipment to facilitate science and engineering research. Another focus of the NSF research activities will be to broaden participation in research, both from the perspective of increasing the number and types of institutions involved in research funding and the diversity of the researchers receiving NSF funding. That broadening participation goal also extends to the science, engineering, technology, and mathematics (STEM) education activities of NSF. The legislation puts particular emphasis on increasing the involvement of community colleges, career and technical education institutions, and rural schools (including K-12 schools) in STEM education projects through NSF. Funding for these efforts will come through a mixture of scholarship/fellowship programs and project-based programs for these organizations.

NEXT STEPS

The CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 includes many exciting grant opportunities for research organizations, education and training providers, and workforce development entities. Right now, we must wait for the fiscal year 2023 federal annual budget to be passed to see these authorized appropriations come to fruition. At the time of writing this article, we are currently operating under a continuing resolution and Congress has not yet passed a budget. Given that this is an election year, we expect the fiscal year 2023 budget to be quite delayed. However, now is a great time to start planning for these anticipated programs. Even if exact appropriation amounts vary, this legislation will likely drive at least some of the priorities of each of these federal agencies. These focus areas will probably be implemented through a mixture of priorities (perhaps including competitive preference priority rubric points) and new grant programs. If your organization is interested in any of these topics, start having informal project planning discussions and form necessary collaborations. Keep an eye on relevant agency websites for information as they release their own annual planning and grant program solicitations, and you will be ready to write your application with the plans you have built through these conversations.

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LEVERAGING NEW AND EXISTING GRANT FUNDING FOR CYBERSECURITY PROJECTS IN K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By: Max Cassity
Grants Development Consultant, K-12 Education

For the last decade, schools have made a push for more and better integrated technology in the classroom. With the COVID pandemic came an increased need to get technology devices like computers, tablets, and wireless internet hotspots into the hands of students who needed them to sustain their educational growth during lockdowns. As students transition back to in-person learning, many K-12 schools are finding themselves in greater need for enhanced internet infrastructure and the tools to secure their networks to protect staff, students, and schools from cybersecurity threats.

Indeed, with the increased ubiquity of technology devices in education, schools have experienced an increase in cyberattacks and data piracy. For an already over-worked and under-resourced school system, these types of attacks can be devastating. In 2022, there have been at least 50 cyberattacks on K-12 schools, including ransomware attacks, phishing, data breaches, and identity thefts. Recently, the Los Angeles Unified School District--the second largest public school district in the US—was hacked and personal information of students and employees was held for ransom. When the district refused to pay, the criminal hackers released stolen information like social security numbers, tax information, and private educational records to the public.

The K-12 Security Information Exchange reports more than 1,300 publicly disclosed cybersecurity incidents in K12 schools since 2016, including 166 incidents across 38 states during 2021. Because these attacks are costly and embarrassing to school districts and local governments, it is likely that many more incidents go unreported. Of the reported incidents, school district vendors were responsible for 55% of K-12 breaches, with students and staff accounting for an additional 21%. The challenge of cybersecurity requires schools and districts to have both an inside and outside game. Schools need up-to-date software and a secure technology infrastructure to prevent outside cyber-attacks. Schools also need training for faculty, students, and vendors to increase digital literacy, raise awareness of data security, and develop safe tech habits. With the number of cyber incidents in K-12 schools rising, schools are looking for ways to fund the necessary improvements to secure the safety of their networks.

Schools looking to stand-up or build out cybersecurity programs may find grant help in some surprising places, including in new legislation from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, remaining COVID funding, popular K-12 learning initiatives, and programs to defend against domestic terrorism.

The **State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP)** is an innovative program established by the State and Local Cybersecurity Improvement Act, part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, to help address the unique challenges that state and territorial governments face when defending against cyber threats. This new grant program will help state and local partners reduce cyber risk and build resilience to the dynamic and evolving cybersecurity threat environment.

Based on latest information, K-12 schools will not be able to apply directly to the program but may be recipients of funding once it is passed down through states and local municipalities, who may set up re-granting programs or use formula-based allocations during FY 23-24. States who have cybersecurity plans ready have until November 15 to submit those cybersecurity plans, and all others can request funds to begin preparing cybersecurity councils and plans over the next year. This program is very new and still developing in each state individually. Schools and districts who are interested in receiving funding or contributing to cybersecurity committees should reach out to the State Agency that is administering the program, such as the state-level FEMA office.

American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funding has been a source of much-needed technology help for many schools, funding student and faculty devices and the means to connect them to high-speed internet in a variety of at-home and in-school learning environments. This increase in end-point devices at schools has also increased the cyber exposure of schools. Accordingly, as of 2021, ESSER guidance states that "if a school, LEA, or State is improving cybersecurity to better meet educational and other needs of students related to preventing, preparing for, or responding to COVID-19, it may use ESSER funds" (source). ESSER funds only have until September 30th, 2024, to be fully obligated, so schools with remaining ESSER funding that have cybersecurity needs should look to utilize that available and tech-friendly funding soon.

Schools may also be able to find cybersecurity funding as a part of larger technology-centered learning outcome-oriented programs available to schools. For example, the **21st Century Community Learning Centers** is a program designed to serve students who need extra learning time and to help their families and communities develop 21st century skills in computer science and improve digital literacy. This program funds before and after school clubs and activities, digital literacy programs, and other technology-based learning. As a part of the program, school security and cybersecurity can be included as eligible expenses.

Similarly, the **Carl D. Perkins Career Technical Education program** supports schools looking to meet local labor needs in technology sectors such as computer science and cybersecurity. Schools interested in preparing their students for the growing field of cybersecurity may be able to include their own threat assessment and security system as a part of the learning environment. Initiating cybersecurity training and programming at schools can serve a key role in preparing students with 21st century skills and securing the spaces where they learn them.

When it comes to keeping schools safe, cybersecurity is being recognized as an essential element of hardening schools against intrusions. US Homeland Security recognizes cyber threats such as ransomware as domestic terrorist threats and encourages schools to develop a stronger cybersecurity posture as part of a holistic approach to school safety. The **State Homeland Security Program** directs funds through state homeland security offices to fund the hardening of schools against physical and cyber threats. Schools will partner with their state agency to receive funding. Similarly, the **Nonprofit Security Grant Program** is the best option for Private and Religious schools looking to harden their school security and improve their cybersecurity posture.

The introduction of the **State and Local Cybersecurity Grant program** shows that state and federal funders are beginning to recognize and respond to K-12 cybersecurity as a clear and present danger for schools, students, staff, and parents. This trend is only likely to increase as cyberthreats become an increasingly normalized part of public education. Until a comprehensive strategy for national cybersecurity is implemented, utilizing recent programs like the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program and ARP ESSER, or exploring learning-oriented or school-safety related approaches to cybersecurity will allow creative schools to secure stable and ready funding for cybersecurity.

STATE AND LOCAL CYBERSECURITY GRANT PROGRAM (SLCGP)

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

Funding from the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP) helps eligible entities address cybersecurity risks and threats to information systems owned or operated by—or on behalf of—state, local and territorial (SLLT) governments. The Homeland Security Act of 2002, as amended by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law requires grant recipients to develop a Cybersecurity Plan, establish a Cybersecurity Planning Committee to support development of the Plan, and identify projects to implement utilizing SLCGP funding.

ELIGIBILITY

All 56 states and territories, including any state of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, are eligible to apply for SLCGP funds.

DEADLINE

State/territory applications must be submitted by November 15, 2022, by 5:00 p.m., EST. A similar deadline is anticipated, annually.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://www.fema.gov/fact-sheet/department-homeland-security-notice-funding-opportunity-fiscal-year-2022-state-and-local

CLEAN SCHOOL BUS PROGRAM

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

School buses collectively travel over three billion miles each year, providing the safest transportation to and from school for more than 25 million American children every day. Nearly all the school buses currently on the road run on diesel, with many lacking modern emission control technologies because they pre-date EPA's most recent emission standards. Exhaust from these buses has a negative impact on human health, especially for children who have faster breathing rates than adults and whose lungs are not yet fully developed. CSB Rebates will fund the replacement of existing school buses with cleaner buses that result in better air quality on the bus, in bus loading areas, and throughout the communities in which they operate.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants include state and local government entities, contractors, nonprofit school transportation associations, and Indian tribes or organizations.

DEADLINE

Applications were to be submitted by August 19, 2022. A similar deadline is anticipated, annually.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus

IT IS TIME TO CLEAR THE AIR: FUNDING FOR K-12 ENERGY EFFICIENCY

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

A few days ago, I was consulting with a superintendent of a small, rural school in Idaho. When I asked him, "What projects are at the top of your mind," he relayed how he has prioritized updating his school's coal-burning boiler that dates back to 1952. With a seventy-year-old boiler, it is no wonder he made the decision to budget and hire engineers to sketch plans! But regardless of all the important steps he had already undertaken, he noted it was still difficult to secure enough funds to account for all the added costs, such as safe asbestos removal and labor.

I am certain this superintendent is not alone with those concerns. District leaders have long asked for support to make infrastructure improvements that would allow faculty and staff to focus on student learning, not whether their classrooms will be warm enough come winter or making a choice between updating an HVAC system or hiring more support staff. In fact, with roughly $8 billion a year spent on energy bills, public K-12 districts are long overdue for help to wrangle in their second largest expense after salaries.[i]

The good news is that help is on the way! Schools have already been directed to utilize any remaining **American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER)** allocations for HVAC repairs, as well as potentially partnering with their state, Tribal, or local government to inquire how **State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)** could be used to support schools. And more timely, local education agencies can expect new grant opportunities to improve energy-efficiency, reduce air-pollution, and take advantage of renewable and alternative energy sources with the passage of the **Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act (IIJA) of 2021**, as well as the recent **Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)** of 2022. These programs provide a path for schools to implement changes that bolster energy resiliency and alleviate hiking energy bills and costly replacement of critical facility and transportation infrastructure.

CLEANER TRANSPORTATION

The first program that has already received its first round of applicants is the Environmental Protection Agency's **Clean School Bus Program (CSB)** created by the IIJA. This new $5 billion program authorizes funds over the next five years (2022-2026) and provides eligible applicants an opportunity to replace existing school buses with zero-emission and low-emission models, as well as an allocation for necessary charging infrastructure for zero-emission school buses.[ii]

Applicants may request replacements for up to 25 buses and funding amounts vary based on prioritization criteria and type of bus. Applications were due August 19, 2022, with $500 million available this first round of funding. A similar deadline is assumed annually until 2026.

ENERGY EFFICIENT FACILITIES

The second program created under IIJA is the **Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Improvements at Public School Facilities** from the Department of Energy. This program has a total funding amount of $500 million and is scheduled to open during the fourth quarter of 2022. Projects that serve high-poverty schools and rural areas will be prioritized, but all local education agencies will be eligible to apply. Thus far, we know funds will help these schools conduct comprehensive energy efficiency audits and retrofits, upgrade HVAC, lighting, and controls, procure alternative fuel vehicles and necessary alternative fuel infrastructure improvements, support clean energy installation, and help train staff to maintain improvements over the long-term. Once the notice of funding opportunity is released, more information will become available as to how scoring will be calculated, but this will certainly be a program worth keeping an eye on!

MORE OPPORTUNITIES ON THE HORIZON

With the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act, also known as the Energy and Climate Bill, schools in low-income and disadvantaged communities can anticipate **Funding to Address Air Pollution at Schools**. The IRA appropriated $50 million to offer grants and technical assistance to monitor and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants and develop school environmental quality plans. Those plans will, among other things, set standards for school building, design, construction, and renovation with the goal to mitigate the impact these activities have on a community.

An investment of $5.55 billion in these two acts alone will set the foundation for the modernization of school buildings and transportation which will drastically decrease the carbon footprint of districts across the country. While we wait for new application windows for these programs to open, now is the time to be proactive like the superintendent from Idaho. Consider leveraging any available ESSER funds to make the most immediate improvements or hire an engineer to draft plans and provide insight as to what your project will cost. Reach out to your local government and inquire about SLFRF availability to support your project. Review the 2022 Clean School Bus Rebates Program guide so you have your ducks in a row come next round and keep an eye out on Department of Energy's funding opportunity exchange for the opening of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Improvements at Public School Facilities. Whatever steps you take, know that help is on the way!

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i. https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/04/04/fact-sheet-the-biden-harris-action-plan-for-building-better-school-infrastructure/

ii. "EPA funding for infrastructure is limited to installations between the electrical meter and the charging port. This can include, but is not limited to, charging equipment (such as AC Level 2 charging equipment or direct-current fast charging equipment), design and engineering, and installation costs such as trenching, wiring and electrical upgrades, labor, and permitting. EPA funds must not be used for any infrastructure costs associated with work on the utility's side of the electrical meter." (2022 CSB Rebates Program Guide)

GET ORGANIZED: COMMON ELEMENTS TO PREPARE FOR MOST GRANT APPLICATIONS

By: Sydney Stapleton
Grant Development Consultant, Higher Education

With grant applications being detailed documents, even the most experienced grant professionals must meticulously review each application thoroughly to ensure they are addressing everything the funder wants. As a grant writer, you are typically working on multiple grants at the same time, which only adds to the need for increased attention to detail. It can be overwhelming to compile and write all the necessary sections of a grant application so we, the team at Grants Office, suggest you set aside some time early in your project timeline to organize your materials. In the last issue of FUNDED, we discussed common documents you will likely need for most grant applications. In this issue, we are focusing on the common elements of grant applications and best practices on collecting and organizing that information. Preparing your material ahead of time will allow you and your organization to focus more time on the overall project and highlighting funder specific details, increasing your chances of being awarded funding.

Check out "Get Organized: Documents You Will Need for Almost Any Grant Application" from our August 2022 FUNDED: https://www.grantsoffice.com/funded

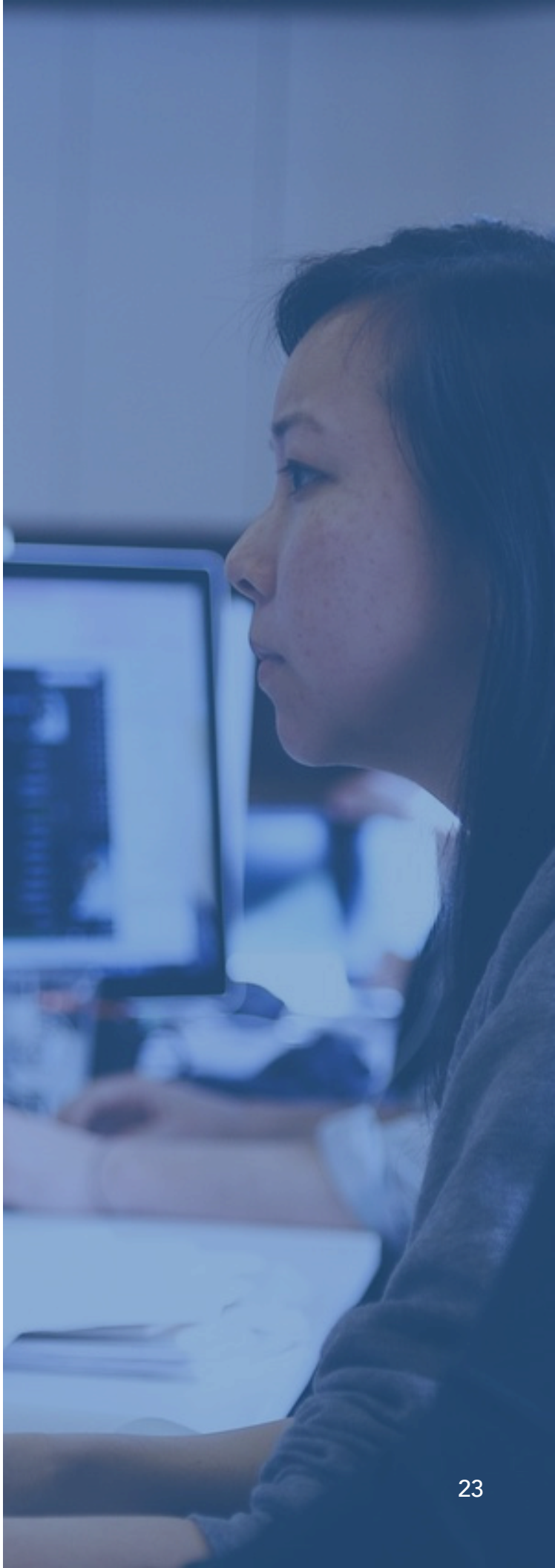
It is important to note that every grant application is unique. Some of the below elements may be titled something different in an application or may not be included at all. This list serves as a starting point on your organizational journey.

STATEMENT OF NEED

Often the first element required in a grant application is the statement of need. A statement of need, sometimes called a "needs statement" or "problem statement," is the underlying issue or problem that you are looking to address with your grant project. These issues or problems should directly affect the population your nonprofit serves. At the end of your statement of need, the grant reviewer should clearly know and understand the issue you are looking to address with your project. Remember, grant reviewers may not know what your organization does for the people you served. It is vital that you make the person understand the importance of your project to both your organization and the community you help. Statements of need are unique to each grant and funder. In order to save time and resources, you should keep past statements of need as templates for future applications. Having easy access to these will allow you to have a jumping off point when writing each new statement.

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

The organizational description is something we see in almost every grant application. This may also be called the organizational background, application description, or sometimes simply the introduction. This section of documentation is often the easiest to prepare ahead of time, since it is not something that needs to be tailored from grant to grant. Funders are typically looking for information that establishes your nonprofit's trustworthiness and capability to accomplish the goals of your project. You should include your **organization's history**. This will include when you were founded, your legal status as a nonprofit, your mission statement, and a summary of your programs. **Staff and board member biographies** should also be prepared and on hand for applications that require such information. Many grant funders want to know who will be working to support your programs and if your team represents the community you are serving. Another component to have ready is your **strategic plan**. While an application may not ask you to include the whole of your strategic plan, applications may ask you to summarize that information somewhere within the project description. Having your strategic plan accessible to pull from while writing your application is always a good decision. And finally, institutional **financial information** is something funders will always want to know. They want to ensure that you will use their money responsibly. You will often need to include your institution's overall budget, annual donations, and past and current funding from other grant makers. This section can sometimes be included in the project budget portion of the application.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project description is going to be the most customized part of a grant application. The project description underscores how your project will be executed, what will be achieved, and what the outcome of the project will be. The content of your project description should be framed around the grant funder's interests and mission, which is why it is critical that your project is a good fit for the funder. Since this section is something that will vary widely from project to project and funder to funder, we will list a few key elements found in many grant applications. Please note it is critical that you review each application for specific requirements. Your project description should list your **project goals**, and what you expect will happen during and after the project. You will also want to list any **key activities** that you will complete in order for you to achieve your project goals. An overall project **timeline** is also something that almost every grant application will ask for. Including this timeline will keep the project manager and team beholden to a schedule and will allow the grant funder to track your progress. Many grant funders are now asking for a **logic model** to be included in the project description. We most often see them with federal grants, but other funders have started to include them in applications. A logic model defines goals, objectives, inputs, outputs, and outcomes related to a specific project. Logic models are usually flowcharts that demonstrate connections between the various parts of a project and allow everything to look visually appealing. Logic models are another part of an application that is very customized to a project, but it is handy to have some internal examples for reference when writing an application. Lastly, include any and all **predicted and/or intended outcomes**. These outcomes should directly address the problems that you discussed in your statement of need.

EVALUATION PLAN

An evaluation plan provides information to improve a project throughout its development and implementation. Not all grant proposals require a full evaluation plan, but many will require some type of evaluation during or after the project. This is important for nonprofits because evaluation and feedback let you know if your project was a success, how well it worked and how you can improve it. An evaluation can be completed internally by staff or externally by an outside expert. Some funders will even allow for the cost of an outside evaluator as a part of the project budget.

PROJECT BUDGET

A grant project budget is specific to the proposed project or program you would like funded by a grant maker. This budget defines what your intended expenditures will be if you are awarded. Project budgets are another element that tends to vary from application to application. Some applications require simple budget numbers on a spreadsheet, while others require a budget narrative explaining each of your needs. If you are required to have both, it is crucial that those two elements cover the same items. Aligning your budget and narrative shows that you have thoroughly considered your project and the monetary needs for its success. A fantastic way to get a budget started is by getting quotes ahead of time from vendors. This allows you to know if the project cost is feasible for you and also shows the funder that you have evidence to support your budget.

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Financial sustainability is something all grant funders look for when making awards. They want to ensure that their investment in your organization will make a lasting impact. When planning out a grant application make sure you have a plan that provides a substantial and specific strategy to continue running your programs once the grant funding has ended. These are things such as how you will fund it once the grant has ended and who will control the program if the PI were to leave. This is another grant element that will need to be tailored to your project.

PAST SUCCESSES

Funders often want to see your organization's past success with both grant and non-grant funded projects. Different funders will ask for several types of success stories. Some will want successes that are directly related to the work being done on the proposed project, while others may require examples of successful projects led by the project manager that don't necessary have to be connected with your proposed project. It is critical to keep detailed records of the accomplishments of your organization. Keep a running list of successful projects and quantitative evidence of how they were successful. Testimonials from people who benefited from those activities are also great supporting material.

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Letters of support are endorsements from people and organizations that have been positively affected by your nonprofit in some way. Letters of support can be general letters that praise your institution. We typically see these types of documents from partner organizations, large donors, a state or local government representative, businesses, and people who have received the services you provided (similar to testimonials). Letters can also be written specifically to back the project you are trying to get funded. These types of letters can come from a partner organization, such as other nonprofits, schools, industry etc., that you will be working with on the project or from a major donor to showcase how you are working to secure funding from diverse sources. Different grants have different requirements when it comes to what types of letters of support they are looking for. Having an array of letters of support in your files is a terrific way to be prepared for grant applications that may have a short turnaround.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Organization is critical to grant application success. By knowing what to expect when applying for a grant, you can reduce or eliminate some of the barriers that stand between you and an amazing application. While not everything in a grant application can be prewritten, by creating summary documents for common sections you will streamline your grant writing method. This reorganization will allowing your institution to concentrate on more useful aspects of your grant seeking journey.

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

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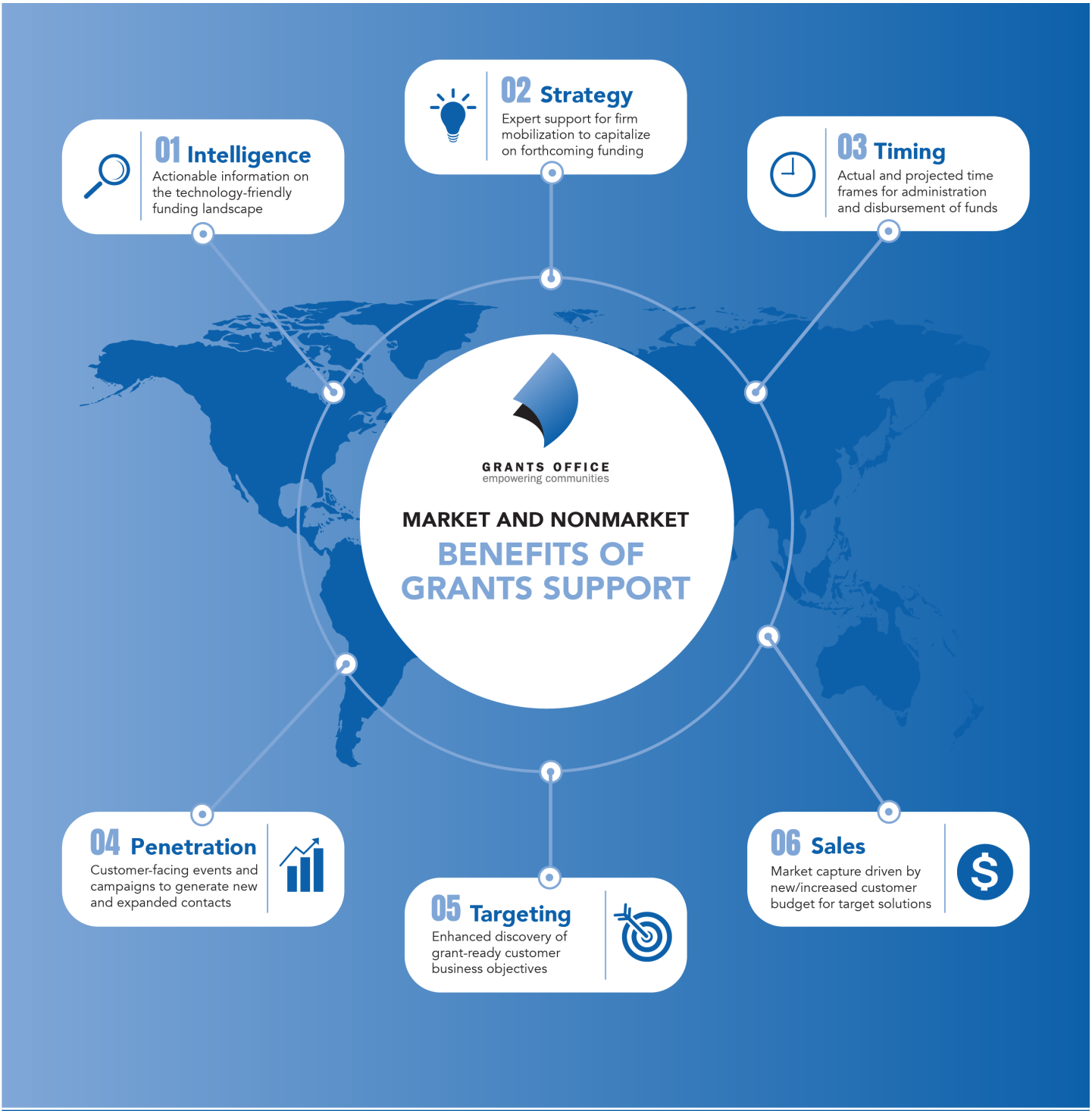

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Date: November 21, 2022 at 1pm ET
Register HERE

Grants Office Presents Global Funding Trends (Series)
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