

FUNDED

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Future-Casting Higher Education Funding in the New Administration

Also: Why Grantseeking isn't just about Writing, Tribal Healthcare Grants, Department of Justice Funding Cuts, How to Decide Whether or Not to Apply to a Specific Grant Opportunity, and much more!



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Letter From the Editor

Dear Reader,

Predicting the future is always a bit fraught, but since we're all in this moment together, for this issue of FUNDED, we've looked at the tea leaves, put on our thinking caps, and given you our best assessment of the current and near-term state of grants and funding opportunities across the country.

Future-Casting is how Dr. Marc Smithers put it in today's cover article, with a look at the much beleaguered – but still promising – higher ed funding landscape. And that's just the beginning of an issues full of insights and information across grantmaking, in which everyone in the US and Canada is sure to find something inspiring and actionable.

In the US specifically, all eyes are on the federal government, since 1) a new administration and a shift in control of Congress are each historically associated with changing priorities in federal grantmaking; 2) much of what ends up as state funding begins at the federal level; and 3) foundation funding is expected to remain largely unchanged. And though this issue has a good deal of news on federal grants, there are also two great articles – on SMART goals and choosing the best funding opportunities to pursue – that will help you further develop your grantseeking skills no matter what level of funder you're planning to apply to.

Speaking of prognostication, I mentioned in the May issue that we are developing a new platform for grant research and proposal management, including many features we think you'll find useful in building your organization's grants development capabilities. Much more will be coming out on that through emails and social media as we get closer to our launch in early September. It's going to be a game changer – built by grants people for grants people!

For those who want to keep an ear to the ground, we continue to maintain a dedicated web page on the latest developments in federal funding rules and changes to the grants.gov publication procedures, the review and award process, and our expectations for how a proactive grants strategy can pay dividends now and into the future.

In the meantime, be sure to check out the other timely and informative Grantscasts our team will be presenting on, or view 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



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Why Grantseeking Isn't Just About Writing: The hidden marathon of research, deadlines, teamwork, and everything in between

Ashley Schultz, Manager of Research and Consultation



When grant professionals describe their work, people often imagine a solitary writer hunched over a keyboard in an office filled with classical music, with awarded funds just a few keystrokes away.

In reality, grantseeking is a rigorous, multi-stage endurance event that demands far more than just writing prowess. From the moment a project sparks an idea to the final report submitted long after the funds arrive, grant professionals must juggle a massive number of tasks. They sort through thousands of funding opportunities across multiple databases, decode 100+ page application packets, facilitate collaboration among diverse teams, create workflows, enforce deadlines, and oversee

every step of the submission process. It is an intricate dance of strategy, organization, and perseverance. Do your family and friends think you are just writing? Tell them to think again. The hidden marathon of the profession requires dedication, training, and a deep understanding of every mile.

If you have ever felt overwhelmed by the sheer volume of tasks involved in securing grant funding, you are not alone. This guide will run through the often-unseen stages of the grantseeking marathon, offering insights and strategies to help you navigate the course with greater efficiency and achieve your funding goals. So, lace up your shoes! We are diving deep into the true nature of the grantseeking journey.

STEP ONE: PLANNING AND PREPARATION

A successful marathon, like a successful grant application, relies on careful preparation before the actual effort begins. Just as no runner impulsively tackles 26.2 miles, no seasoned grant professional randomly chases funding. Early groundwork ensures every subsequent action in the grantseeking process is deliberate and aligned with clear, purposeful objectives.

(a) Assess your fitness level and set goals.

Runners, their family members, and their medical professionals start any running journey with a frank assessment of the current state. Why do they want to run a marathon? Can their body handle the strain? What is the goal of all that work?

Grant professionals run similar evaluations when their organization leadership tasks them with capturing funds. They ask important questions about the upcoming project, such as What problem will it solve? Who will benefit? What specific activities will take place? Can the organization absorb these new activities in its current structure without feeling overburdened? This groundwork is crucial for defining the project's core purpose and ensuring organizational readiness before seeking external funds.

Pro Tip: We all know those crazy runners who marathon “just for fun.” Avoid a similar pitfall in your own organization of grantseeking “just to increase revenue.” Successful teams approach each grant initiative with clearly stated objectives that start new or improve existing service delivery.

(b) Choose a race and make a commitment.

Runners then face the task of researching marathon events – weighing factors like time of year, distance from home, and hilliness of the course. The optimal race gives them ample time to work through a full training regimen that avoids undue risk on important joints.

For a grant professional, this is the critical stage of researching prospective funding opportunities. They pour through various grant databases, government websites, foundation directories, and professional networks to identify potential funders whose missions align with their new project. The best funding candidates support their organization type, geographic area, and ideal outcomes, while also providing enough time to build a complete and competitive proposal before the due date.

STEP TWO: TRAINING

With a clear end goal and timeline in mind, runners and grant professionals are off to the races (pun intended). For runners, training is the longest and most demanding stage of the process, lasting anywhere from 6 weeks to 4+ months, as they build endurance, speed, and mental toughness while minimizing risks on race day.

(a) Build an appropriate training plan.

Runners preparing for a marathon build out extensive training plans with varied workouts (long runs, tempo runs, intervals), cross-training, proper nutrition, hydration, adequate rest, and lots of Spotify playlists. This work ensures they are not only physically capable of completing the marathon but also that they do so in the healthiest and most enjoyable way possible.

The process for grantseekers is equally active. They build teams of internal and external collaborators who will assist in getting the project across the finish line. Like how runners balance their short and long runs, grant professionals assign varied roles in the proposal development process. This ensures an effective mix of hands-on contributors and committed leadership (like board members, the executive director, and department heads) who are crucial for project execution and grant compliance.

With the project team established, grant professionals then create a detailed calendar that assigns responsibilities. This ensures everyone is aware of crucial dates—from meeting schedules and draft deadlines to final application submission timelines—and understands their specific roles in each task.

(b) Gather your essential gear.

Runners enhance their training with specialized gear, including performance clothing, shoes, water bottles, and fitness tracking apps. This equipment offers practical training benefits while also making the experience more enjoyable and colorful.

For a grant professional, this stage involves compiling vital application components. Physical gear is replaced with virtual copies of IRS determination letters, financial audits, board lists, resumes of key personnel, organizational budget, letters of support, and evaluation data. Data to support the project's problem statement and preliminary outlines of the anticipated budget are added as well.

Pro Tip: Runners keep their gear in a noticeable place as a visual cue and a psychological nudge for days with low motivation. Keep your grantseeking team similarly engaged by storing important application documents in an obvious, centralized, and easily accessible location.

STEP THREE: RACE DAY

Weeks of planning and preparation culminate in this moment. It is time for the shoes to hit the pavement and for the pens to meet the paper! “Race Day” is when all a grant professional’s strategically built plans and carefully gathered content transform into a compelling and powerful grant narrative.

(a) Go!

After a flurry of parking, packet pickup, and pre-race nutrition, runners gather at the starting line to begin their 26.2-mile journey.

Grant professionals experience a similar flutter in their stomach as they stare at an empty page that is ready to be filled with content. They follow the course set by the funder, crafting a compelling story that addresses all sections requested in the funding guidance. They tailor their language to resonate directly with the funder’s unique priorities and guidelines.

(b) Pace yourself.

A disciplined, consistent speed is vital for successful marathon completion. Paced runners have better management over their energy, while reducing the risk of injury, fatigue, and late-race discouragement.

Grant writing requires a similar degree of controlled pacing to ensure the very last question of the proposal is answered with the same level of detail and care as the first. Writers must also build in time for proofreading - inspecting for grammar, spelling, clarity, consistency, and adherence to funder guidelines. Reviews often occur over multiple rounds, involving project team members, leadership, and potentially an external reviewer, to gather comprehensive feedback.

Pro Tip: Writers and runners should both stop for snacks and proper hydration. While at your desk, stretch every 30-60 minutes in areas commonly affected by prolonged sitting. Try out neck rolls, shoulder shrugs, arm circles, wrist flexes and extensions, and gentle back twists.

STEP FOUR: POST-RACE COOLDOWN AND RECOVERY

This final stage begins immediately after crossing the finish line and continues for several weeks. Just as a runner embarks on a period of post-race recovery, grant professionals shift their attention to consolidating application information, following up with funders, and managing post-award requirements for successful proposals.

(a) Celebrate.

Runners are met at the marathon finish line by an enthusiastic crowd, receiving snacks, water, and mementos like medals or T-shirts to commemorate a job well done.

Grant professionals straddle the fence of being both the person celebrated and the person leading the celebration for others. They take an internal moment to savor the accomplishment of clicking submit on an application and then turn to share that joy with their project team. They send messages confirming submission and recognizing each member for their contribution to the effort. Some even incorporate a tradition of ice cream, donuts, or other treats after a successful proposal is wrapped.

(b) Recuperate.

As the runner’s high subsides and the sore muscles wake up, marathoners move through an active recovery plan that allows their body to repair and relax post-race.

Grant professionals experience a similar recuperation after clicking submit. They “clean up shop” by saving final application documents, including submission confirmations, for easy reference. They also establish systems to monitor their application’s progress with reviewers, ready for any follow-up questions or requests from the funder.

This recovery period is vital, as successful applications initiate a new set of responsibilities for grant professionals. Post-award tasks—reviewing grant agreements, executing projects, and meticulously maintaining records of expenditures, activities, and progress—continue for the entire grant award duration, which can sometimes span more than two years.

So, the next time someone pictures you hunched over a keyboard, it is my hope that you can more accurately explain the full scope of your “race.” The grantseeking profession is not just about the words on the page; it is about an entire, well-run marathon of research, organization, collaboration, composition, and management. I also encourage you to consider each completed application (whether it is successful or denied) as an effective way to strengthen your organization’s grantseeking muscles - preparing you and your team to tackle even greater distances in the future.

Technology 101: Guidance for the Health System Grant Writer

**Amber Walker, Grants Development
Associate (Healthcare)**

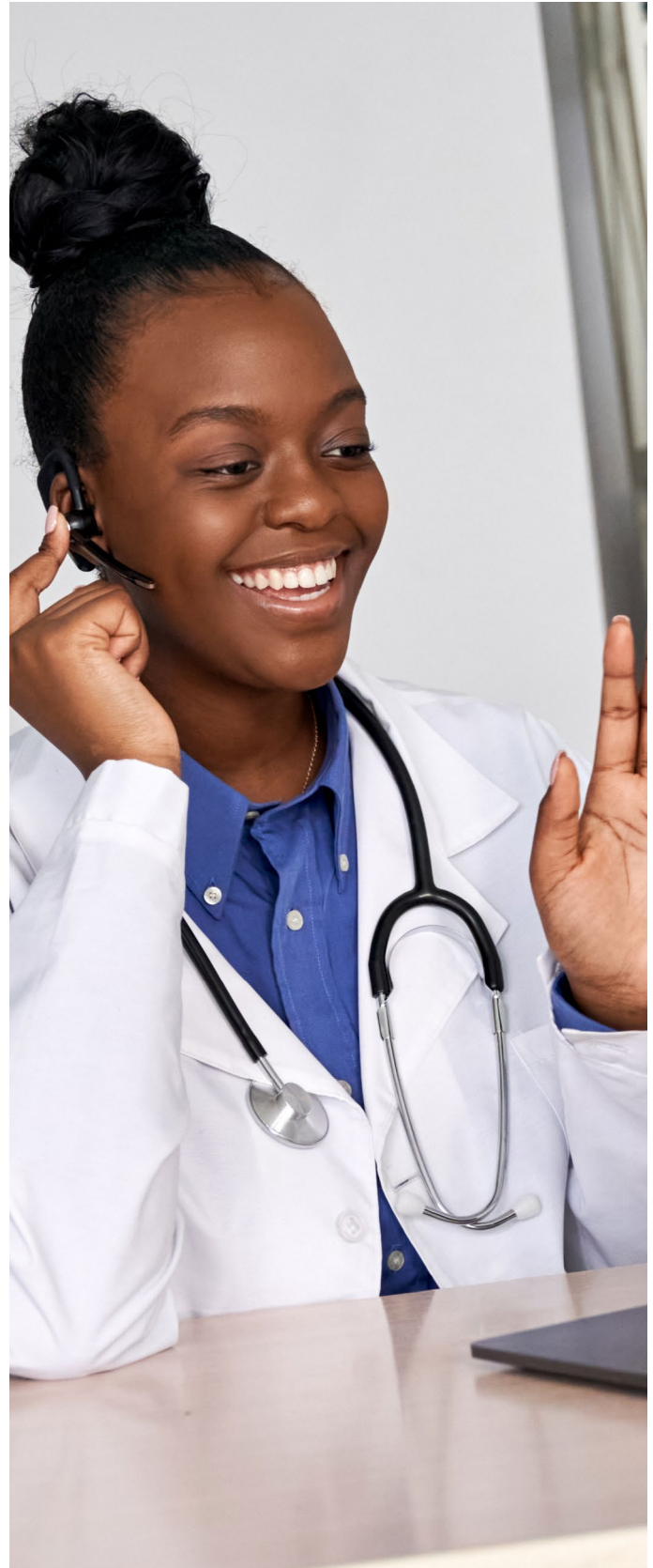
Grant writing is a very rewarding career path, but it is not without challenges. Staying up to date and knowledgeable about current funding opportunities, the needs of your communities, and the needs and capacity of your organization are just a few of the things to stay current with. Healthcare grant writers are also increasingly tasked with familiarizing themselves with new and innovative technology being utilized by the healthcare workforce.

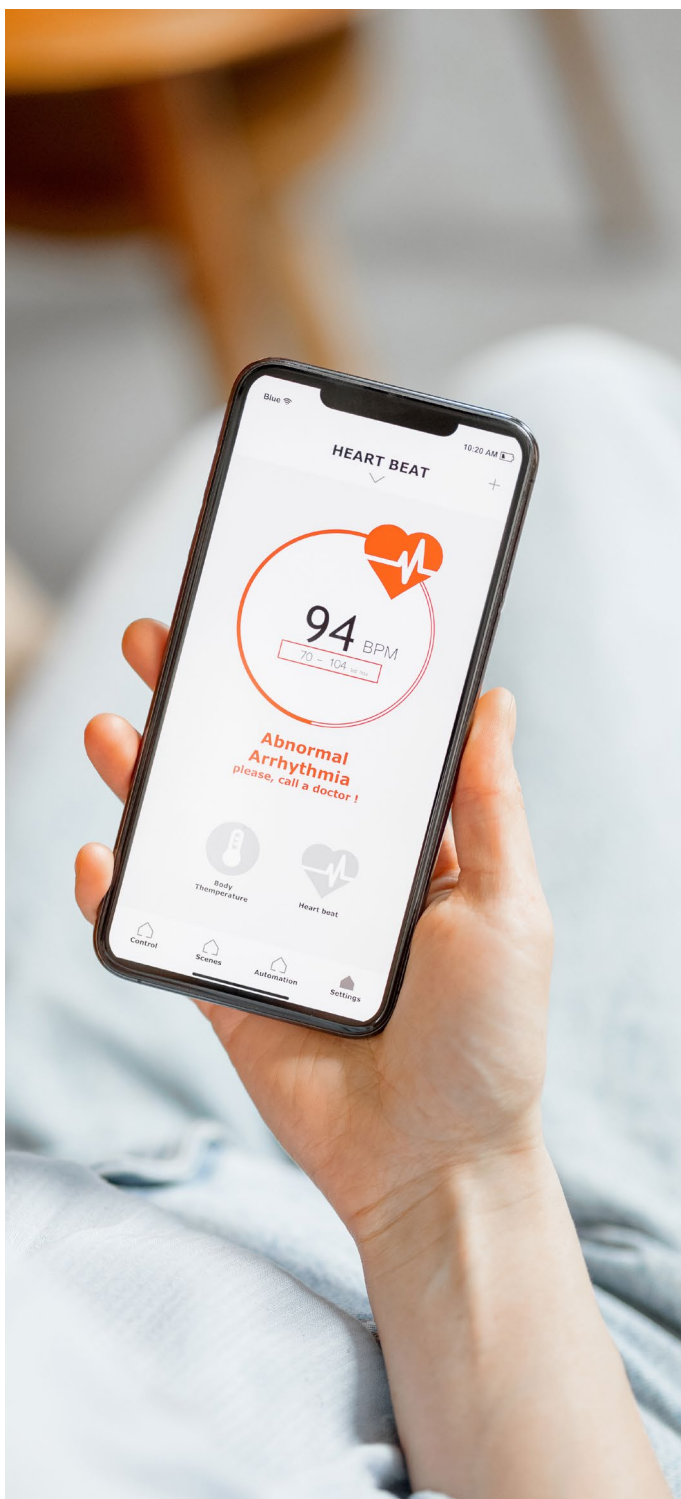
Many resources exist to understand the funding opportunity landscape, such as grants.gov, state websites, listservs, and sites that track foundation opportunities. The needs of your community and hospital should be well documented through census and population data, trends in your region, and other community-level information. However, keeping up with trends in healthcare technology can require a whole other set of skills that grant writers, even in the healthcare systems, are not always targeted for.

Healthcare delivery is advancing, and the role technology assumes in this space is evolving and integrating at a rapid pace. Technology integration is a wonderful thing that will improve patient experiences, improve population health, reduce cost, and advance health equity, to name a few of the benefits. These concepts are well understood by the grant writer in and out of the health care space but understanding the correlation between technology and the result will be hugely beneficial to developing proposal narratives.

This resource is intended to elaborate on commonly used technologies in healthcare and hospital space. It is intended to help the average grant writer better understand how technology is being integrated into grant fundable projects.

Telehealth projects are increasingly popular, and grant opportunities to fund telehealth projects are common at the foundation, state, and federal levels. To better understand the technology supporting a telehealth project, it is beneficial to look at both ends of the relationship.





End users (where the patient is receiving care) will utilize devices like smartphones, tablets, or home monitoring devices like a pulse oximeter. They will also utilize apps like Mychart or Teladoc, an internet connection, and security tools such as authenticators and a firewall.

Providers (where the doctor works) will utilize medical devices, software and electronic health records, internet connection and software, as well as security tools.

Other examples of home monitoring devices that could be utilized by a telehealth program include, but are not limited to, blood pressure cuffs, glucometers, ECG+ stethoscope, wearables (activity tracker), Bluetooth thermometer, or scale.

Other commonly misinterpreted technologies in health care are **Clinical Decision Support (CDS) and AI Technology**, although both could be used to elevate efficiency.

CDS uses specific parameters (such as diagnoses, laboratory results, medication choices, or complex combinations of clinical data) to provide information or recommendations directly relevant to a patient encounter at the point of care.

AI in Healthcare refers to the use of **computer algorithms and models**, especially those that mimic human learning and decision-making, analyze complex medical data, **assist in clinical decisions**, automate tasks, and improve patient outcomes.

Internet of Medical Things is a collection of connected devices that communicate patient data in real time to healthcare providers. These can include remote monitoring wearables, in-hospital connected devices, health IT platforms and Infrastructure, and security and communications technology.

Electronic Health Records (EHRs) are an extremely common element to a health care delivery project or initiative. EHRs are health information stored on servers or in the cloud. Digital version of patients' paper charts that makes information available instantly wherever it is needed. These are increasingly connected to some of the technology above, including AI virtual assistance to improve patient participation and an active role in healthcare.

These are just a few of the technologies that healthcare delivery is utilizing. As a grant writer for a health system, being able to narrate to funders why this tech is necessary will be extremely helpful as you craft your proposals. Learning about the technology that impacts patient care is an ongoing endeavor.

For further reading, check out [Healthcare IT Today](#) for blog posts, articles, and information on upcoming conferences across the healthcare IT landscape.

Tribal Funding Series Part 3: Tribal Healthcare Grants

Amanda Day, Grants Development Consultant (State and Local Government)



Key Health Challenges

The average estimated life expectancy at birth for AI/ANs was 67.9 years, a contrast to 77.5 years for non-Hispanic Whites.

Deaths due to chronic liver disease and cirrhosis are 4.6 times higher, diabetes mellitus deaths are 3.2 times higher, and heart disease are 3.2 times higher than in the U.S. Non-Hispanic White population.

Alcohol-induced deaths occur at a rate 6.6 times higher, while assault/homicide rates are 2.1 times higher, and intentional self-harm/suicide rates are 1.7 times higher than in the U.S. Non-Hispanic White population.

Source: [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health \(OMH\)](#)

Native American and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities face significant and long-standing health disparities compared to other racial and ethnic groups in the United States. These disparities underscore the urgent need for robust and flexible funding mechanisms like grants. Geographic isolation and the lack of nearby healthcare facilities pose substantial challenges to accessing care in rural areas. However, approximately 70% of Native people reside in urban areas. As a result, many urban Native individuals lack direct access to the resources offered by IHS or tribally operated facilities. Language and communication barriers, along with a lack of representation in the healthcare workforce and a history of discrimination, further limit access to healthcare and erode patient trust.

Grants play a pivotal role in bridging critical funding gaps, enabling tribes to address specific health challenges, develop essential infrastructure, and deliver culturally appropriate care. Grants can provide funding for services such as screening, prevention, treatment, and recovery programs tailored to

tribal populations. Additionally, these grants are essential for supporting tribal self-determination and enabling Native nations to develop and oversee health programs that reflect their specific community needs and cultural traditions. Although numerous grants fund healthcare infrastructure, some specifically aim to provide training to Native individuals in medicine, behavioral health, and public health, empowering tribes to build and sustain their own healthcare workforce. Grants also enable tribes to build epidemiology capacity, collect health data, and participate in research that informs policy and programming. This supports long-term planning and response, including during emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

While tribal governments are eligible for federally funded healthcare programs, sources of federal funding specifically for tribal organizations include the Indian Health Service (IHS), the Administration for Native Americans (ANA), and the Administration for Community Living (ACL), as well as state-run programs and private foundations.



One source of federal funding is the [IHS Native Public Health Resilience Grant](#), which aims to enhance the capacity of Tribes, Tribal organizations, and Urban Indian Organizations to implement core public health functions, services, and activities, and to develop further and improve their public health management capabilities. This program seeks to build on and strengthen community resilience as part of the IHS mission to raise the physical, mental, social, and spiritual health of American Indians and Alaska Natives to the highest level.

Additionally, the [Tribal Behavioral Health Grant Program](#) aims to prevent and reduce suicidal behavior and substance use/misuse, reduce the impact of trauma, and promote mental health among American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) youth, up to and including age 24. The goal of this program is to be a model for community change that integrates a community's culture, resources, and readiness to address suicide prevention and substance use/misuse among AI/AN youth.

State-level programs can also be a good source of grant funding for healthcare facilities. The Minnesota Department of Health established the [Indian Health Grant Program](#) to provide assistance in delivering clinical health services, including culturally informed preventive, medical, dental, and mental health care services, to Native communities residing off reservations.

And finally, private foundations play a significant role in funding tribal healthcare initiatives. For example, [The Wildhorse Foundation](#) awards funds in several program areas that are fundamental to a thriving community in the area of the Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla people of Oregon. In New Mexico, the [Con Alma Health Foundation](#) offers multi-year grants to support New Mexico communities in leading healthy lives. Grants are awarded each year in support of nonprofits' efforts to improve their community's health.

Grants enable tribes to implement targeted programs for chronic disease management, mental health, substance abuse, and infrastructure development, often incorporating culturally relevant practices and traditional healing methods. Tribal grant funding is not just a financial lifeline; it is a tool for restoring health sovereignty, advancing justice, and closing decades-long gaps in healthcare access, outcomes, and cultural safety. When well-structured and adequately resourced, these grants provide targeted, comprehensive, and affordable healthcare for Native American and Alaska Native (AI/AN) populations.

Program Snapshot

Tribal Behavioral Health Grant Program

SUMMARY

This program provides funds to tribal governments to respond to prevent and reduce suicidal behavior and substance use, reduce the impact of trauma, and promote mental health among American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) youth through the age of 24 years by building a healthy network of systems, services, and partnerships that impact youth. SAMHSA expects this program to be a model for community change that integrates a community's culture, resources, and readiness to address suicide prevention and substance use/misuse among AI/AN youth.

The Tribal Behavioral Health program was designed to focus on the unique needs of federally recognized AI/AN tribes, tribal organizations, Urban Indian organizations, or consortia of tribes or tribal organizations. In regard to AI/AN youth suicide, mental health promotion, mental health promotion, and substance use prevention, the behavioral health challenges include the need for:

- Accessible behavioral health care, grounded in the traditions of each community;
- Transparent, practical crisis protocols that can be implemented in an emergency and include clearly defined follow-up procedures to care for youth at risk;
- Coordination among youth-serving programs in AI/AN communities; and
- Tribal leadership support in reducing suicidal behavior and substance misuse among Native youth up to age 24.

These needs are met through sustained, consistent work that creates change in a community through a public health approach that includes increased adherence to culturally based interventions. The program focuses on laying the necessary groundwork and infrastructure for an effective community behavioral health system, while also developing conditions for lasting change beyond the life of the grant.

ELIGIBILITY

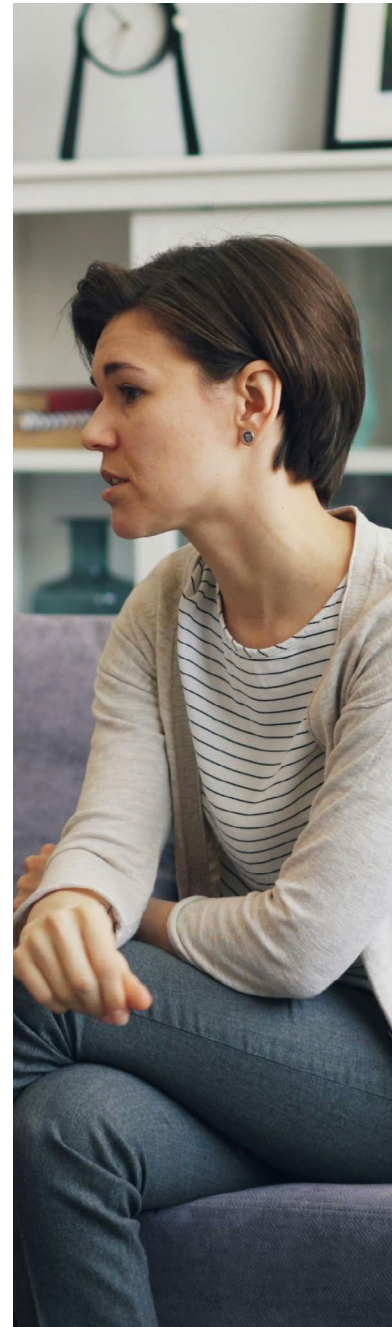
Eligible applicants include an Indian tribal government, Urban Indian Organizations, any tribe, band, pueblo, nation, a tribal designee, tribal consortium, or other organized group or community.

DEADLINE

FY2025 deadlines are to be announced.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/grant-announcements/sm-23-021>



COVER STORY

Future-Casting Higher Education Funding Based on the First Half-Year of a New Administration

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



The first six months of the new presidential administration have brought about profound changes to the grants landscape, particularly for institutions of higher education. Colleges and universities have faced intense scrutiny and uncertainty, some seeing awarded projects voided for being antithetical to the executive office's priorities, while others are being told they are at risk of losing all federal funding for championing initiatives that are seen as politically motivated. The breakneck pace at which these changes have been implemented has left grantseekers at institutions of higher education feeling overwhelmed, confused, and hesitant to step into the federal grants landscape as they wait to see how the new administration's priorities take shape. With over half a year of data to consider, though, now is the time to step back and reflect on what has happened and what may happen in the future. While there is far more that can be said about the current and future state of higher education grant funding in America, here are three things grantseekers at colleges and universities should know about (1) what has changed, (2) what has stayed the same, and (3) what institutions should be doing now to prepare for the future.

THREE SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO GRANT FUNDING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

1. Shifts Away from Equity, Inclusion, and Green Energy

By far, the most editorial space given to reporting on the changes to the higher education grants landscape has been the freezing and widespread cancellation of already awarded projects. Most of the changes the administration made to these awards were due to funds being used to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, though the new administration has also attempted to pull funding from research and training in green energy technologies and other presumed progressive projects. This shift has been felt in nearly all agencies and programs, with the [National Science Foundation \(NSF\)](#), [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#), and the [Department of Education](#), among others, cancelling millions of dollars' worth of research projects based on equity and inclusion concerns. The award cancellations have been mired in legal challenges, but regardless of the outcome, the most notable change in the higher education grants landscape has been the abrupt shift away from equity, inclusion, and other progressive causes.

2. Capping Indirect Cost Rates

In addition to cutting awarded programs, another well-known change has been the attempt by several agencies to cap indirect cost rates to no more than 15% of a project award. The NIH, which previously capped indirect costs at unique negotiated rates with each institution, began to implement this rate in early February, with the [Department of Energy](#) following suit in April, and the [NSF](#) in May. While these changes were implemented with equal effects on all awarded entities, these caps have had an unquestionably large impact on institutions of higher education, leading several colleges and universities to take legal action against the presidential administration. The outcome of these lawsuits and alternative proposals being discussed in Congress are pending as of this writing. Colleges and universities should monitor these changes closely to ensure compliance with these requirements.

3. Centralized Collaboration and Review of Grant Awards

A change that has received less attention than the previous two areas, however, is the overall increased and centralized involvement of departmental agencies and the executive branch in the activities of awardees. The most high-profile instance of this change was the Department of Homeland Security requiring all awards over \$100,000 to be individually [reviewed by her office](#), though many other federal agencies have instituted stricter reviews and more intensive oversight of awarded institutions. The [NIH announced](#) in March that they were centralizing their review process away from their institute-based peer-review process, while the Department of Justice has added compliance with federal immigration office requirements to some of their most recent application guidance, such as the [School Violence and Prevention Program](#), the [Services, Training, Officers, and Prosecutors Violence Against Women Grant Program](#), and the [Safer Outcomes Program](#). These changes highlight a desire within the current administration to not only ensure funds are not used for causes which they view as politically progressive, but to also exercise more centralized authority over how all funds are spent and whether they further a more cohesive approach to the executive branch's agenda.

THREE POINTS OF CONTINUITY IN GRANT FUNDING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

1. Longstanding Programs Continue to be Funded

Despite the significant changes that have rattled the higher education funding landscape, one of the most encouraging signs of the past half-year has been the continuation of longstanding, popular programs in various agencies. While the future of



some programs are in jeopardy with the budget negotiations in Congress, agencies continue to run programs like the Office on Violence Against Women's [Reduce Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking on Campus Program](#) (Campus OVW), the Department of Education's [Developing Hispanic Serving Institutions Program](#), and the NSF's [Improving Undergraduate STEM Education Program](#). Even with the elimination of areas of focus related to equity and inclusion, as well as green technology, each of these programs looks similar, if not identical, to the previous funding cycle's guidance. With these similarities, institutions can more easily prepare to apply for these opportunities in the future, even as aspects of the funding landscape are in a state of flux.

2. Many Agency Priorities Continue to be Areas of Focus

In addition to seeing longstanding programs continue to be funded, another point of continuity seen in funding opportunities is the relative stability of many agency priorities that have carried over despite the change in administrations. The NSF continues to prioritize most of its areas of focus, including broadening participation in STEM, and most annual programs have continued without much, if any, revision to their guidelines, including the [Advanced Technological Education Program](#), [Faculty Early Career Development Program](#), and the [Computer Science for All Program](#). The Campus OVW Program contained some changes regarding interagency collaboration, yet each of the focus areas institutions can build a project around, remaining unchanged from the 2024 application guidance. Like the continuation of programs, the continued areas of focus for many of these programs can also help institutions construct competitive projects well before a program is announced.

3. Innovative Fields Continue to be Agency Priorities

A major point of continuity between the previous administration and the current one has been specific fields of innovation that institutions of higher education are well-positioned to contribute to, most notably in artificial intelligence and cybersecurity. Multiple agencies have released new and continuing programs focused on these areas of innovation, such as the National Institute of Standards and Technology holding a new round of their [Regional Alliances and Multistakeholder Partnerships to Stimulate \(RAMPS\) Cybersecurity Education and Workforce Development \(RAMPS Program\)](#). As institutions continue to consider ways to bring innovative technologies onto their campuses and enhance their effectiveness, federal grant opportunities continue to be a source of funding they should consider.

THREE ACTION STEPS INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHOULD TAKE NOW

As colleges and universities continue to grapple with the unprecedented changes happening at the federal level in the midst of the enrollment challenges brought on by the looming demographic cliff, there are steps that each institution should consider taking when reflecting on these changes and similarities in the federal grants landscape.

1. Determine Your Institution's Willingness to Align with Federal Priorities

Before considering what programs your institution may pursue, it is imperative that institutional leaders conclude how willing they are to align institutional priorities with the current administration's priorities. Many institutions will find it difficult, if not impossible, to alter initiatives focused on equity and may face significant challenges in adopting a more collaborative approach to work on immigration. These are conversations that should happen regardless of the outcomes of pending litigation and must be transparently communicated to the grantseekers at colleges and universities so that faculty and staff can alter their funding strategies.

2. Gain a Basic Understanding of Laws Governing Key Programs

One way to plan ahead for future opportunities is to have a basic knowledge of the laws that created and sustain key funding programs, such as the [Higher Education Act of 1965](#), which, with several amendments made since its passing, has funded several programs such as the Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program. Having a working knowledge of some of these key pieces of legislation can give your institution an advantage in preparing a competitive project for programs that can be expected to continue since they are funded through an act of Congress.

3. Ensure Your Institution is Grant Ready Now!

Knowing what programs are expected to continue and whether your institution can align itself with federal priorities is useful only if your institution is committed to becoming grant-ready. We have many [resources for grantseekers](#) on how to ensure your institution is grant-ready, including an article in this issue of FUNDED on the [hidden aspects of grantseeking](#). Also, track these and many other changes to the federal funding landscape at our blog, [Navigating the Grant Landscape Under a New Administration](#). Use these free resources to help your institution be prepared for programs before they open to ensure you are submitting the most competitive proposal you can!

CONCLUSION

The higher education environment has had ample periods of uncertainty and disruption, and the changes to federal funding programs have added to an already chaotic time for college and university leaders. Taking time to reflect on what has and has not changed, though, can provide a clearer understanding of the scope of these changes and provide a potential course of action for institutional leaders to enact. While the future of any of these programs mentioned is not certain, the ability for institutional leaders to discern emerging patterns and continuities between the previous and current administration can provide a degree of confidence and a call to action for college and university grantseekers.

Program Snapshot

Improving Undergraduate STEM Education (IUSE): Directorate for STEM Education

SUMMARY

The Improving Undergraduate STEM Education (IUSE): Directorate for STEM Education Program seeks to improve and broaden interest and engagement in STEM education by bringing recent advances in STEM knowledge and research into undergraduate learning environments.

For FY25, there were two tracks that institutions could develop a project focused on, each with three different levels of funding and periods of performance:

Track 1: Engaged Student Learning

These projects must show the potential of increasing student learning and engagement in STEM fields, such as through new and innovative teaching methods, faculty development opportunities, or co-curricular learning opportunities with a STEM focus.

Track 2: Institutional and Community Transformation

These projects fund systemic change initiatives at the departmental, institutional, or multi-institutional level using evidence-based practices that are based on a theory of change that incorporates deliberate interventions in undergraduate STEM learning environments.

ELIGIBILITY

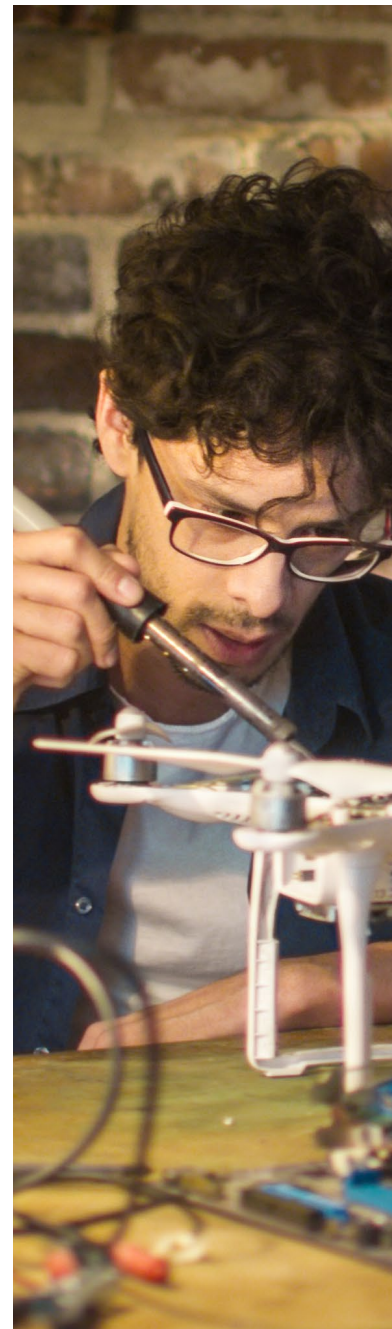
All institutions of higher education are eligible to apply.

DEADLINE

Applications for the Engaged Student Learning Track, Levels 2 and 3, as well as projects for the Institutional and Community Transformation Track, were due July 16. Applications for Level 1 projects for the Engaged Student Learning Track and Capacity-Building projects for the Institutional and Community Transformation Track are due January 21, 2026. Future deadlines for these tracks occur on the third Wednesday of July and the third Wednesday of January annually.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=505082



Analysis of Recent WaterSMART Awards

Joseph Phelan, Grants Development Consultant (State and Local Government)

Federal grants remain in a holding pattern as the current administration aligns grants with priorities. WaterSMART, from the Bureau of Reclamation under the US Department of Interior, is one of the flagship programs that has yet to open a new funding opportunity for any of its funding opportunities. Notice of Funding Opportunities had been posted for several programs, with deadlines sprinkled throughout this year, but had been under review, most likely due to climate change-related executive orders from the previous administration. As the pause continues, it is an appropriate time to review one of the major WaterSMART programs to better understand what type of projects it funds and what states have received funds in recent years.

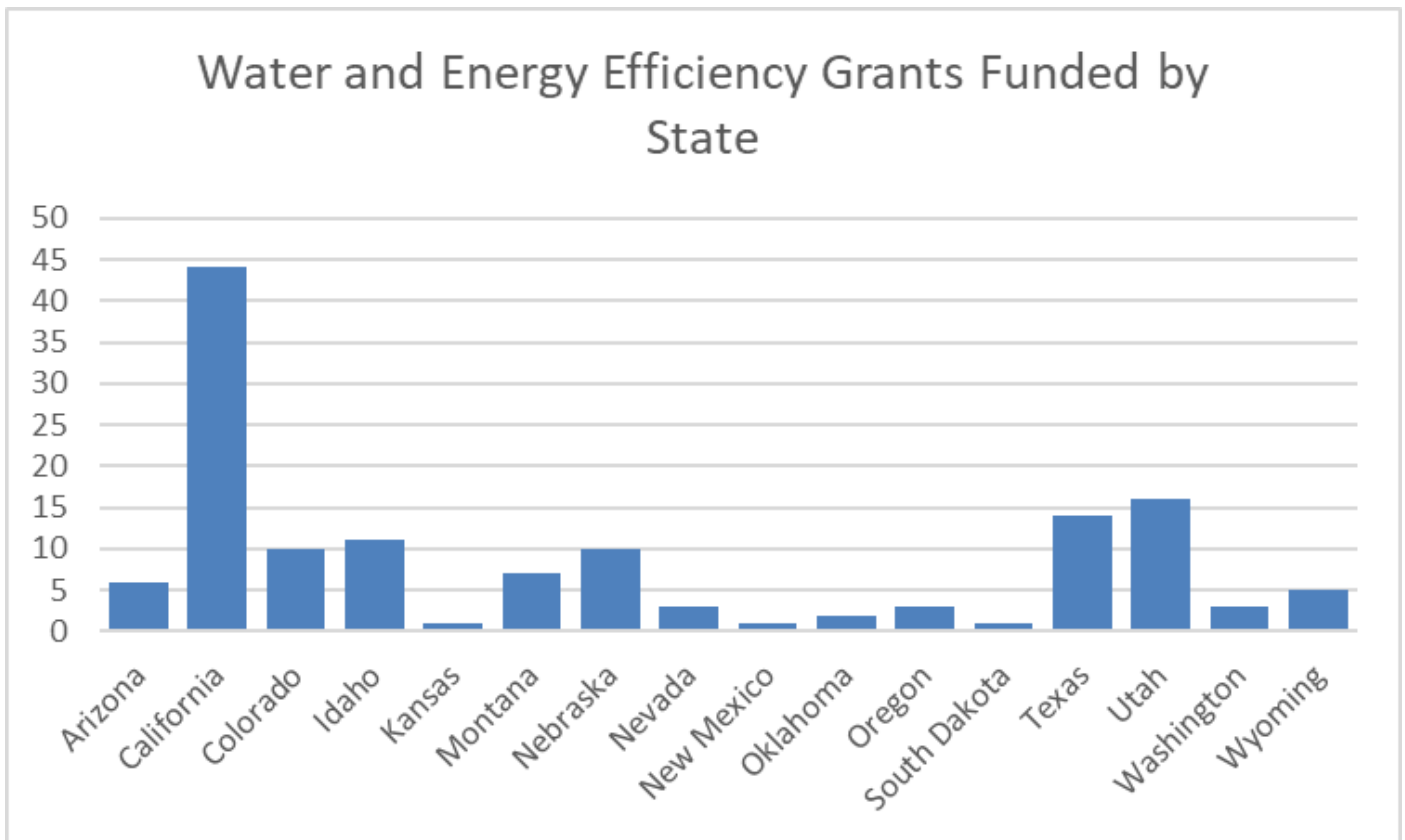
WaterSMART itself stands for Sustain and Manage America's Resources for Tomorrow. It administers programs that strive to answer the water challenges facing the western part of the United States. Recycling, restoration, and watershed management are a few priorities under WaterSMART. There is a desire to improve the infrastructure of aging water facilities as well as increase the water supply for those areas most in need.

The Water and Energy Efficiency Grants program has a clear focus on providing funds to conserve and use water more efficiently or increase the production of hydropower. This program will fund up to 50 percent of an irrigation or water district, tribe, or state project. A key factor is that the organization must be in one of the 17 Western States or Territories, including Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Virgin Island.

In 2023 and 2024, the program funded over 150 projects with an average federal award amount of \$1.6 million.

To the right are eight project types funded under this program. It is important to point out that most funded projects use more than one of these types.

Project Type	Description
Canal lining and/or piping	Any project that line or pipe canals
Municipal metering	Installing smart meters
Supervisory control and data acquisition and automation (SCADA)	SCADA or any automation components to increase operational efficiencies
Landscape irrigation measures	Turf removal, smart irrigation controllers, or high-efficiency nozzles
High-efficiency indoor appliances and fixtures	Rebates or direct-install programs to residents
Commercial cooling systems	Retrofitting or replacing large cooling towers
Hydropower facilities	Installing a new facility, increasing the capacity of an existing one, or investing in a facility to bring hydropower capacity back online
Installing solar-electric, wind energy, or geothermal power systems	Essentially replacing fossil fuel-powered pumps with renewable energy-based pumps



Viewing how many times an organization from a specific state has been awarded a Water and Energy Efficiency grant in 2023 and 2024 shows California far and away has, unsurprisingly, given its size, had the most success with almost forty-five projects. The only state that has not received funding during this stretch under this program is Hawaii.

How much information a grant program provides will vary by the grant-making agency. The Bureau of Reclamation shares fully approved applications, which makes it easy to understand what projects are being funded and how. For instance, many

organizations factored smart meters and SCADA into their project scopes, while rebate programs were not as popular. To view any awarded project under the Water and Energy Efficiency Grants program, visit here: <https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/weeg/successful.html>

WaterSMART applications are detailed and require plenty of supporting documents, with many nearing a maximum of fifty total pages. That means now is a good time to brainstorm and plan for a future opportunity.

Project Highlight

WaterSMART Water and Energy Efficiency Grants (Municipal Metering)



FUNDED ORGANIZATION

Marana, Arizona

PROJECT TITLE

“Advanced Metering Infrastructure Water Meter Replacement Program”

AMOUNT FUNDED

\$500,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Town of Marana, located in Pima County, will replace 2,543 residential water meters with advanced metering infrastructure capabilities with cellular endpoints and interface the new meters into a customer portal for improved efficiency and use patterns for easy data readout. The project is expected to result in annual water savings of ninety-three acre-feet that is currently lost to leaks and overuse. Water saved through this project will remain in the system and reduce groundwater pumping in the Tucson Active Management area that has been designated by the Arizona Department of Water Resources for active management of groundwater resources.

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION

https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/weeg/docs/2024/WEEN-114_TownofMarana_508.pdf

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE

<https://www.maranaaz.gov/Home>

Project Highlight

WaterSMART Water and Energy Efficiency Grants (Irrigation Flow Measurement)

FUNDED ORGANIZATION

Middle Republican Natural Resources District

PROJECT TITLE

“Remote Irrigation Meter and Irrigation Water Conservation Project (Phase 3)”

AMOUNT FUNDED

\$1,100,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Middle Republican Natural Resources District, located in southern Nebraska, will install near real-time telemetry equipment on 691 irrigation flow meters for improved on-farm water management and reporting. The project is expected to result in annual water savings of 2,610 acre-feet, which is currently lost to overwatering. Conserved water will remain in the local aquifer to maintain groundwater levels for future irrigation events as well as improve discharge for baseflow in the Republican River, which has been designated by the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources as over-appropriated for water resources.

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION

https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/weeg/docs/2023/MiddleRepublic_508.pdf

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE

<https://www.mrnrd.org/>



Project Highlight

WaterSMART Water and Energy Efficiency Grants (SCADA)



FUNDED ORGANIZATION

Fresno Irrigation District

PROJECT TITLE

“SCADA Improvement Program”

AMOUNT FUNDED

\$498,650

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Funds will expand the SCADA system by adding four flowmeters and equipping fifty-five flow telemetry sites with battery backups. The project will improve radio communications through the installation of ethernet radio to at least nineteen sites across the district to improve data gathering frequency and stability.

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION

https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/weeg/docs/2024/WEEN-037_FresnoIrrigationDistrict_508.pdf

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE

<https://www.fresnoirrigation.com/>

Federal Dollars, Local Economies: Navigating Grant-Funded Development in Northern Canada

Sid Aubeeluck, Grants Development Associate (Canada)



INTRODUCTION

Canada's North continues to embody a place of resilience and determination, where communities are driving bold development, celebrating vibrant cultures, and forging a sustainable future.

Yet even with billions in federal funding invested over the years, communities across Nunavut, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories still face economic uncertainty, limited infrastructure, and persistent barriers to growth, raising a critical question: *Is grant funding truly empowering these communities to build the sustainable future they are striving for?*

A recent evaluation by the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) sheds light on this debate. It reviews three flagship programs: IDEANorth, the Northern Business Relief Fund (NBRF), and the Northern Isolated Community Initiatives Fund (NICI), between 2019 and 2023. While the report highlights successes such as jobs retained during the pandemic and impressive leveraging of investment dollars, it also surfaces persistent challenges that limit the programs' long-term effectiveness and overall impact.

This article will explore these 3 CanNor programs and investigate their outcomes, considering how grant funding can be better leveraged to further support a resilient and self-sustaining future for Canada's North.

UNDERSTANDING THE NORTH: ECONOMIC REALITIES AND REGIONAL CHALLENGES

Canada's northern territories (Nunavut, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories) are home to around 125,000 people, nearly half of whom are Indigenous, spread across more than 40% of Canada's landmass. The region offers immense promise, with opportunities in sectors such as natural resource extraction, renewable energy, fisheries, and Indigenous tourism. It also boasts a young and increasingly skilled population, as well as a growing appetite for community-led innovation.

Yet the path to long-term prosperity remains difficult. The North continues to face structural barriers that limit economic diversification and community well-being. Vast distances, harsh climates, and low population density contribute to a significant infrastructure gap, leaving many communities without reliable transportation networks, broadband connectivity, or energy systems. The economy remains heavily reliant on resource extraction, making it vulnerable to global commodity swings and boom-and-bust cycles. High costs of living and doing business, limited access to capital, and a shortage of skilled labour further restrict growth. At the same time, food insecurity remains a serious and ongoing concern, particularly in remote and Indigenous communities where nutritious, affordable food is extremely difficult to access.

To help northern communities overcome these persistent challenges, the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) has introduced three central grant programs: the Inclusive Diversification and Economic Advancement in the North (IDEANorth) program, the Northern Business Relief Fund (NBRF), and the Northern Isolated Community Initiatives Fund (NICI). Let us take some time to briefly explore what each program offers.



THE IDEANORTH PROGRAM

Launched in 2019-20, the IDEANorth program is CanNor's main flagship and ongoing initiative to drive sustainable economic development across Nunavut, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories. Replacing the earlier Strategic Investments in Northern Economic Development (SINED) program, IDEANorth received a significant boost of \$75 million over five years from Budget 2019, expanding CanNor's ability to invest in foundational economic infrastructure, sector growth, and capacity building.

IDEANorth supports a wide range of projects, including business scale-up, innovation, small-scale infrastructure, and large economic infrastructure studies. Its goal is to position Northerners to fully participate in Canada's innovation economy. The program is designed with flexibility in mind, offering both grants and repayable contributions tailored to the specific needs of each project and recipient.

Between 2019 and 2023, IDEANorth funded 235 projects, leveraging \$2.59 from other sources for every dollar invested. Recipients reported growing their businesses, creating and maintaining jobs, and strengthening local partnerships. Notable initiatives include feasibility studies for hydroelectric power and broadband expansion that promise to enhance connectivity and economic viability in remote regions.

IDEANorth remains active and vital, with planned funding of over \$30 million for the 2025-26 fiscal year. It continues to be a core tool for fostering economic diversification, innovation, and resilience, key to building a strong, sustainable future for Canada's North.

Timing	Description
Short-term Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Territorial economic growth and capacity are supported • Gaps in territorial small-scale economic infrastructure are addressed • Increased readiness to address territorial foundational infrastructure gaps • Partnerships established with Northern governments and organizations • Businesses are supported to grow
Medium-term Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investments to advance territorial economic growth and sector development contribute to increasing local or regional economic development activity • Investments in small-scale economic infrastructure contribute to increasing local or regional economic development activity • Pre-construction readiness activities are used to advance foundational infrastructure projects
Long-term Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundational investments in key sectors of the territorial economies contribute to enhanced sectoral growth • Strong, dynamic, diverse, innovative, and inclusive territorial economies for the benefit of Northerners and all Canadians

THE NORTHERN BUSINESS RELIEF FUND

The Northern Business Relief Fund (NBRF) was established as a swift and targeted response to support small and medium-sized businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic across Canada's northern territories.

Launched in 2020, the program provided over \$20 million in emergency grant funding to help businesses manage operational costs, retain employees, and stabilize economic activity amid widespread disruptions caused by public health restrictions and supply chain challenges. The program covered a range of sectors, including retail, tourism, services, and Indigenous-owned enterprises, reflecting the diverse economic landscape of the North. By offering timely, accessible funding, NBRF played an essential role in maintaining jobs and preserving business continuity in remote and vulnerable communities where economic resilience is especially vital.

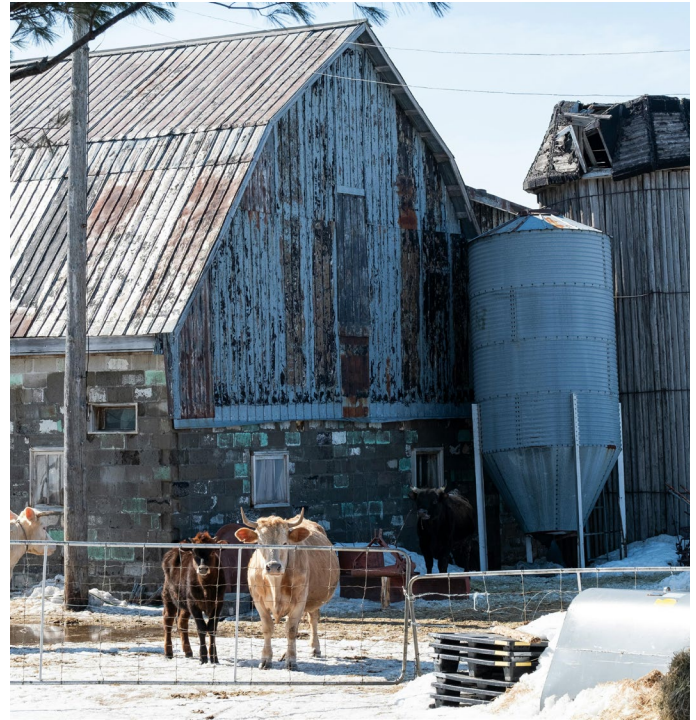
Overall, the Northern Business Relief Fund helped cushion the immediate economic shocks of the pandemic, reinforcing the importance of tailored support programs in sustaining Northern businesses through periods of crisis.

THE NORTHERN ISOLATED COMMUNITY INITIATIVES FUND

The Northern Isolated Community Initiatives Fund (NICI) supports community-led projects that enhance food security and strengthen regional food systems in Canada's northern and isolated communities. By promoting local food production, processing, and distribution, the fund aims to reduce food insecurity while fostering sustainable economic development.

In the 2023–24 fiscal year, NICI allocated \$2.5 million to eight Indigenous and non-Indigenous community-led initiatives across the territories. These projects addressed various aspects of food security, including the development of local food infrastructure, support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the food sector, and the implementation of innovative solutions to nutritional challenges, such as improving access to fresh, affordable produce in remote communities where transportation and storage pose significant obstacles. The Northern Food Innovation Challenge (Stream 2 of NICI) received \$2.5 million to scale up innovative food systems projects and coordinate knowledge dissemination opportunities.

NICI remains an ongoing program, with planned funding of \$2.5 million for the 2024–25 fiscal year. This continued investment underscores the government's commitment to supporting northern communities in building resilient and self-sustaining food systems.



PROGRAM CHALLENGES AND THE PATH AHEAD

Despite short-term gains, IDEANorth, NBRF, and NICI face common obstacles that limit long-term impact. These include:

Short Project Timelines

Many projects operated within brief funding cycles that limited their ability to build lasting economic capacity and achieve sustainable change. Extending project timelines and offering multi-year funding would enable deeper planning and more effective implementation, fostering durable outcomes.

Limited Long-Term Performance Tracking

While immediate outputs like jobs saved were tracked, there was insufficient data on long-term outcomes, making it difficult to measure sustained benefits. Strengthening performance measurement systems and improving data collection are essential to better assess ongoing impact and guide future program enhancements.

Administrative and Capacity Barriers

Complex application and reporting requirements created challenges, especially for smaller, Indigenous, and remote communities that often lack grant-writing expertise. Simplifying application processes and providing targeted capacity-building support can broaden access and allow more communities to fully benefit from federal funding.

Moreover, each program faced its own unique set of challenges that impacted its effectiveness and reach.

IDEANorth

Focused on economic diversification and innovation, IDEANorth faced criticism for not adequately addressing foundational structural challenges such as high living costs and limited infrastructure. While economic and sector development are important, these efforts can struggle without a solid base, much like trying to cook a great meal without the necessary ingredients. Greater emphasis on investments in essential infrastructure like affordable housing, reliable transportation, and further broadband access will be critical to unlocking sustainable growth.

Northern Business Relief Fund

As a short-term pandemic relief program, NBRF played a crucial role in supporting businesses during an unprecedented crisis. To build on this success, implementing ongoing support mechanisms and establishing clear follow-up processes can help businesses smoothly transition from emergency relief toward sustained recovery and growth. Ensuring that pandemic support contributes to long-term resilience aligns with the broader goal of fostering sustainable development across Northern communities.

Northern Isolated Community Initiatives Fund

Increasing funding levels and improving project delivery timelines would significantly enhance NICI's reach and overall effectiveness. A larger funding envelope would allow more isolated and vulnerable communities to access critical resources, especially for projects focused on food security, local infrastructure, and community resilience. Timely delivery is equally important; delays can stall momentum, increase costs, and reduce community trust in the program. Faster, more predictable funding cycles enable communities to plan effectively, mobilize local expertise, and implement initiatives when they are most needed. Together, these improvements would help NICI better fulfill its mandate to support isolated communities in building sustainable, self-reliant economies.

CONCLUSION

CanNor's initiatives—IDEANorth, NBRF, and NICI—have played a key role in empowering northern communities, supporting local businesses, investing in infrastructure, and advancing food security. These programs have helped answer the question at the heart of this article: Yes, grant funding is empowering these communities and continues to do so! But there is still more to be done. Persistent challenges such as short funding timelines, limited long-term tracking, and uneven access remain barriers to deeper, lasting impact.

To build on this progress, Canada must maintain and strengthen its commitment to long-term, community-led development through stable funding, improved outreach, and greater support for capacity-building. This is not simply a matter of support; it is a strategic investment in a region with immense potential. With sustained and thoughtful funding, northern communities can continue advancing toward a resilient, inclusive, and self-sustaining future.

SOURCES:

<https://www.north.gc.ca/eng/1729012641999/1729012675565>

<https://opencanada.org/changing-face-economic-development-canadian-north/>

<https://www.cannor.gc.ca/eng/1351104567432/1351104589057>

<https://www.rcaanc-cimac.gc.ca/eng/1560523306861/1560523330587>

Program Snapshot

IDEANorth Program

SUMMARY

IDEANorth is CanNor's main flagship program supporting economic development across Nunavut, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories. It funds diverse projects such as business growth, innovation, and infrastructure through flexible grants and repayable contributions, aiming to boost northern economic diversification, job creation, and community resilience.

The program operates through four distinct funding streams:

- **Sector & Capacity Development:** Supports foundational investments to advance territorial economic growth and sector development.
- **Business Scale-Up and Productivity:** Targets investments to SMEs, start-ups, and entrepreneurs to expand their businesses, accelerate growth, and enhance productivity and competitiveness.
- **Small Scale Economic Infrastructure:** Facilitates the development of small-scale economic infrastructure through the construction of new or the improvement of existing multi-user community infrastructure.
- **Economic Infrastructure Studies (Large Scale):** Supports pre-construction readiness activities for large-scale economic infrastructure projects, including feasibility studies and planning

ELIGIBILITY

You can apply to IDEANorth if you are a registered organization (Indigenous and non-Indigenous), including social enterprises, businesses, other levels of government, and other non-federal entities, public or private, that have an interest in economic development in the North.

Priority will be given to applicants who can demonstrate proven capacity to deliver projects in the North and interest/engagement in territorial economic development.

DEADLINE

Application deadlines vary by program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.cannor.gc.ca/eng/1464199651173/1464199702530>



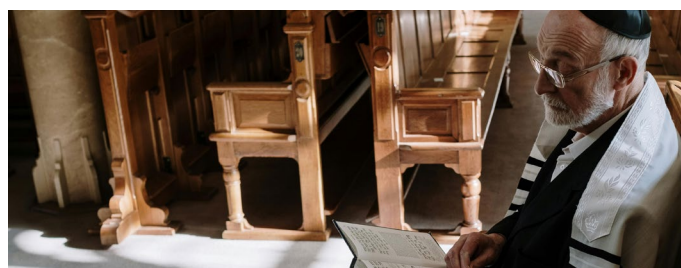
What's Going on With the Nonprofit Security Grant Program? The Latest News on NSGP

Meghan Jacobsen, Grants Development Associate

The Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) is one of the most anticipated funding opportunities for houses of worship and other at-risk nonprofits. Designed to support organizations at heightened risk of threats due to their beliefs, ideology, or mission, NSGP provides critical funding for both physical and cybersecurity enhancements. For many organizations, this program makes it possible to obtain the security equipment, infrastructure, and training they would otherwise not be able to afford, helping protect both their facilities and the communities they serve.

NSGP is a pass-through grant, funded by the federal government but administered by states, with deadlines that usually land in the springtime. While specific deadlines are set by individual states, most deadlines traditionally fall somewhere between March and early June. However, due to changes in administration, shifting funding priorities, and broader uncertainty across the grants landscape, we are still awaiting the release of the FY25 cycle. So, when can we expect this program to open? This is a question I get asked on a near-daily basis, and the truth is no one knows. What we do know is that, historically, once it opens, there is usually a very short runway to apply – sometimes 30 days or less – so preparing for this grant early is absolutely vital. You can begin preparing now by completing a vulnerability assessment and registering with Sam.gov for a UEI. If your organization has already received a UEI, make sure it is up to date. Lastly, check in with your state administering agency for any other requirements to make sure you are ahead of the game.

While the official timeline remains unclear, one thing is certain: funding for NSGP in 2025 has been reduced by 40% compared to the previous year's allocation. With that in mind, we anticipate that this year's program will be especially competitive. When planning your project, keep in mind how your organization is at a heightened risk of domestic or foreign terrorist attacks. Break-ins, vandalism, and crime in your area may not be enough to justify a grant with NSGP. Remember, the purpose of this program is to prevent and keep communities safe from **terrorism**. Instead, your proposal should tie your organization's risk to specific threats such as rising antisemitism, the conflict in Gaza, or hate crimes stemming from your religious, ideological,



or community affiliation. A compelling, risk-based justification will significantly strengthen your application.

What else can you do to make your proposal stronger? First, keep in mind that many applications get rejected over little mistakes that can be easily avoided. According to the [Community Security Initiative](#) these include:

- Requests that do not align with the vulnerability assessment (remember everything you request in the Investment Justification **MUST** align directly with the vulnerability assessment)
- Failing to obtain or update your UEI number
- Including unallowable costs in your budget
- Omitting key application components, such as your mission statement
- Neglecting to meet state-specific prequalification or registration requirements

For this reason, reading your state's application guidance is imperative. Contact your program manager with any questions or clarifications prior to submitting your application. Consider creating a detailed checklist of requirements and reviewing it once or twice before submitting will help avoid mistakes or omissions that may otherwise jeopardize your application.

Although we do not yet know when the FY25 NSGP will open, we do know it will open. The best thing you can do is prepare now. A strong, timely, and well-supported application starts with early action. Preparation is power—and it is your best asset in securing the funding you need to keep your organization and community safe.

Program Snapshot

Nonprofit Security Grant Program

SUMMARY

The NSGP provides funding support for target hardening and other physical security enhancements to nonprofit organizations that are at high risk of a terrorist attack. The program seeks to integrate the preparedness activities of nonprofit organizations with broader state and local preparedness efforts. The NSGP also serves to promote emergency preparedness coordination and collaboration activities between public and private community representatives, as well as state and local government agencies.

Allowable NSGP costs include:

- Planning
- Equipment - Eligible costs must focus on facility hardening and physical & cybersecurity enhancements. This equipment is limited to select items, which can be found in the [federal application guidance and the DHS Authorized Equipment List \(AEL\)](#)
- Training & Exercises
- Maintenance and Sustainment
- Contracted Security Personnel
- Management and Administration (M&A) fees - Costs relating to the management and administration of IBSGP funds, such as financial management and monitoring. M&A costs may not exceed five percent (5%) of the total grant award.

ELIGIBILITY

Awards are made to State Administrative Agencies (SAAs). The SAA must pass through 100% of NSGP allocations to eligible nonprofit organizations.

Eligible nonprofit organizations must be: (1) Designated as a 501(c)3 agency; and (2) Determined to be at high risk of a terrorist attack by the Secretary of DHS. Applicants to NSGP-UA must also be located within one of the FY2024 UASI-designated Urban Areas.

DEADLINE

Deadlines vary by state.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/nonprofit-security>



Charter School Funding Landscape

Christina Fernandez, Grants Development Consultant (Education)

Public Charter schools occupy a unique space in the American public education system. Though publicly funded and tuition-free, they are authorized and governed by the state, the district, or a management organization under a legislative contract—a charter—that allows them to operate independently of traditional school districts. In return for autonomy, the charter school must meet the accountability standards outlined in its charter, which are typically based on academic, financial, and operational performance. This flexibility allows charter schools to design and implement educational models that align with student interests, community needs, or innovative teaching approaches. For example, many charters specialize in STEM education, language immersion programs, or project-based learning curricula that emphasize hands-on, real-world problem solving. With the option for more specialized learning environments, charters have become a more appealing choice for families across the US. An increase in enrollment was seen, especially during COVID-19, when families were transitioning to fully remote virtual charter schools to meet the unique needs of the pandemic.

Currently, public charter schools serve nearly 3.8 million students across 8,150 schools and campuses.¹ While charter schools are not new, their rising popularity and continued expansion have created a growing need for funding opportunities. To better understand how these schools are supported, this article will provide an overview of the federal, state, and private funding sources available for them, and how those sources differ from or overlap with those of traditional public schools.

FEDERAL

At the federal level, the largest stream of funding is the Charter Schools Program (CSP). For FY25, the Trump administration increased funding for CSP grants by \$60 million, making a total of \$500 million available in funding across six different programs. This program was established to support the start-up, replication, and expansion of high-quality charter schools. Housed under this program are the following competitive funding streams:



- **Grants to state entities** - Awarded to State Education Agencies to allow them to conduct their own subgrant programs to new or existing charters in their state.
- **Grants to Charter school developers** - Awarded to charter school developers to enable them to open and prepare for the operation of new charter schools, or to replicate/expand high-quality charter schools in States that do not currently have a CSP State Entity grant.
- **Grants to Charter Management Organizations (CMOs)**- Awarded to CMOs to replicate or expand one or more high-quality charter schools, or to open a new school based on an existing charter school model.
- **Charter School Facilities Incentive Grant** – Awarded to state agencies to establish or expand per-pupil facilities aid programs for charter schools by matching nonfederal funding, with the goal of encouraging states to gradually assume a larger share of facilities financing costs.
- **Credit Enhancement for Facilities** – Awarded to eligible entities so they can enhance the credit of their charter schools and access private-sector and other non-Federal capital to acquire, construct, and renovate facilities at a reasonable cost.
- **Model Development and Dissemination (new FY25)**- Awarded to eligible entities to develop and broadly disseminate information about innovative and successful high-quality charter school models.

Outside of this dedicated funding stream, public charter schools are also eligible for other competitive federal programs like Education Innovation and Research and the School Violence Prevention Program.

1. <https://data.publiccharters.org/knowledge-base/1-how-many-charter-schools-and-students-are-there/>

STATE

Overall, states use a variety of methods² to fund charter schools, including:

- Applying the same funding formula used for traditional public schools;
- Offering eligibility for state grants or categorical aid;
- Allocating funds differently based on the charter school's authorizer or type;
- Using unique calculation methods that differ from those used for traditional public schools

In most states, funding for charter schools is comparable to traditional public schools. However, funding gaps may arise due to the difference in student demographics, particularly when comparing the enrollment of students with disabilities or English language learners in a traditional public school vs a charter school. Traditional public schools often serve higher percentages of these students, which makes them eligible for additional per-pupil funding. While charter schools also serve students from diverse backgrounds, research has shown that, on average, they may enroll fewer students requiring more individualized support.

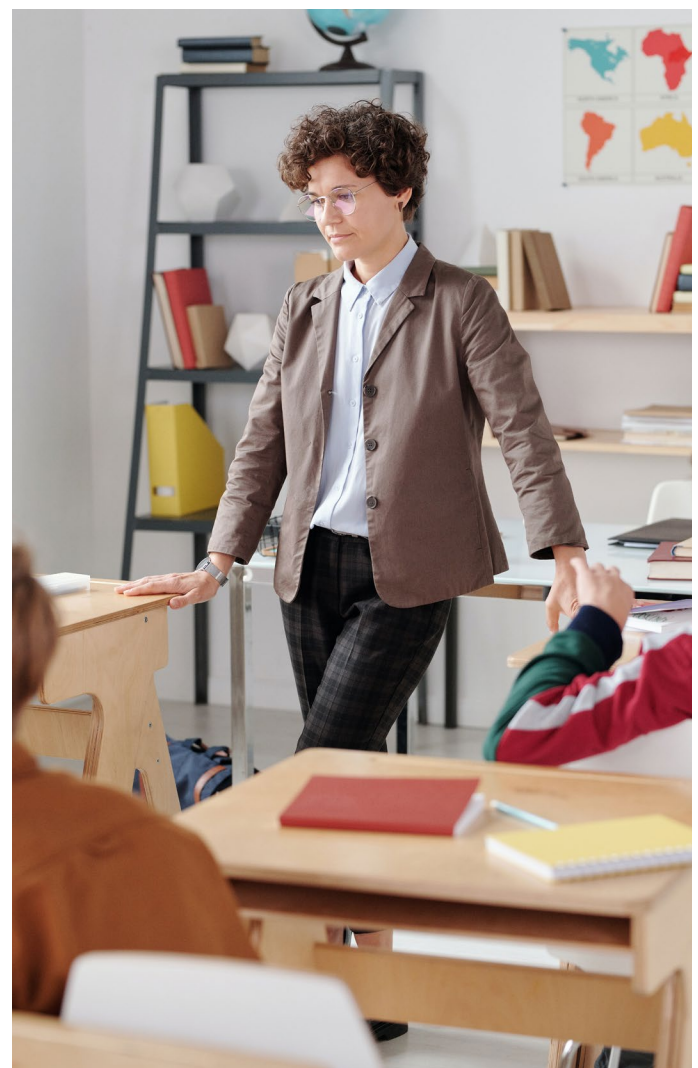
Other funding discrepancies can arise due to a charter's limited access to local property tax revenue, which is commonly used to support traditional school facilities. For example, charter schools typically do not benefit from property taxes, which can leave them without resources for building upgrades or maintenance. However, states like California may offer programs like the CA Charter Schools Facilities Program to address this gap and provide facility lease assistance or matching funds.

FOUNDATION

To offset public funding gaps, charter schools frequently turn to private sources of funding and philanthropic support. This support often comes in the form of private donations, grants from foundations, and contributions from individuals through fundraising. Private sources typically provide support to cover startup costs, facility expenses, curriculum development, and teacher training. For example, the Walton Family Foundation has awarded millions of dollars to support the startup and expansion of charters, particularly those serving low-income and underserved communities. Other national foundations, including Gates, KeyBank, and Michael and Susan Dell, have also been a source of private funding for charters as they are interested in innovative education models, expanding access to education, and improving student outcomes.

CONCLUSION

As charter schools continue to grow in number and influence, understanding their unique funding landscape is more important than ever. Like traditional public schools, charters navigate a complex blend of federal grants, state policies, and private philanthropy to secure the resources they need. While programs like the Charter Schools Program and state-level facilities aid offer critical support, funding gaps remain, particularly for independent charters without access to local property tax revenue or large management networks. The philanthropic sector has played a vital role in bridging these gaps, but securing these funds requires a comprehensive approach. As public interest in school choice grows and political priorities shift, the future of charter school funding will depend on continued investment, thoughtful policy, and strong community partnerships.



2. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED628315.pdf>

Program Snapshot

Charter Schools Program (CSP)



SUMMARY

The Charter School Programs (CSP) provides funds to create promising new public charter schools, replicate high-quality public charter schools, and disseminate information about effective practices within charter schools.

For FY 25, there were six funding opportunities available:

1. Expanding Opportunities Through Quality Charter Schools Program (CSP) Grants to State Entities
2. CSP- Grants to Charter Management Organizations for the Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools (CMO Grants)
3. Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities Program
4. State Charter School Facilities Incentive Grants
5. CSP- Grants to Charter School Developers for the Opening of New Charter Schools and for the Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools
6. Expanding Opportunities Through Quality Charter Schools Program (CSP) Model Development and Dissemination Grants

ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility varies by program but may include Charter School Support Organizations, Charter Management Organizations (CMOs), Charter School Developers, Governors of a State, State Charter School Boards, State Educational Agencies (SEAs), Non-Profit Organizations, and Public and Private Entities.

DEADLINE

Application deadlines vary by program. These programs typically occur in the summer each year, and the application period lasts approximately 30-45 days.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/grants-birth-grade-12/charter-school-programs>

Project Highlight

CSP- Grants to Charter Management Organizations (CMOs) for the Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools (CMO Grants)

FUNDED ORGANIZATION

Dove Schools, Inc.

PROJECT TITLE

“Dove Schools CSP CMO Grant Application FY 2024: Expanding High-Quality Opportunities Across Oklahoma”

AMOUNT FUNDED

\$9,242,500

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Through the FY 2024 CSP CMO grant, Dove Schools will broaden the reach of its currently successful campuses and provide more high-quality seats to students in both Oklahoma City and Tulsa by rearranging campus grade configurations to match local traditional public school districts and increasing overall district enrollment of 3,195 students by 66% over the next five years.

The project had two main objectives:

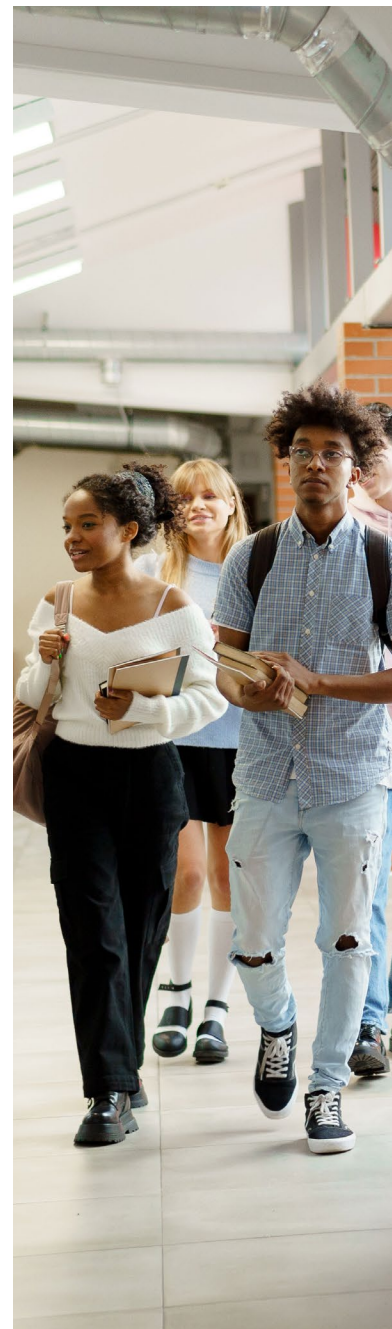
1. Increase the number of available high-quality seats in the Dove Schools network, especially for educationally disadvantaged students.
2. Ensure that Dove Schools students are considered college and career-ready by graduation.

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION

<https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/grants-birth-grade-12/charter-school-programs/charter-schools-program-grants-to-charter-management-organizations-for-the-replication-and-expansion-of-high-quality-charter-schools-cmo-grants#awards>

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE

<https://www.doveschools.org/>



Back to Basics: Creating SMART Goals

Dr. Liz Shay, Senior Grants Development Consultant

The overarching purpose of a grant application is to convince the funder that your organization's project is a viable and responsible use of their funds and will help address the goals of the program. A well-developed project with full work plan details will demonstrate that you are ready to move forward and implement the planned initiative. One of the ways that you can demonstrate that your organization is ready and will be effective in your programmatic efforts is to make it clear that you know how to show when your project is successful. A SMART application narrative will provide you with the necessary tools to convey your progress towards outcomes.

Still deciding if you are pursuing a particular grant program? Check out Back to Basics: How to Decide Whether or Not to Apply to a Grant Opportunity on page 37!

WHAT DOES SMART MEAN?

The SMART acronym stands for Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic, and Time-bound. Some other sources use other words in this acronym, but the components will be the same. Each of these five items should be addressed for each individual SMART goal and objective (more about that below).

- **Specific:** The component should avoid ambiguity and give the details necessary to establish the goal or objective within the context of the proposed project.
- **Measurable:** There needs to be a criterion for demonstrating that the goal or objective has been met. In other words, there should be a number included in the description that indicates when you know the goal or objective has been met.
- **Actionable:** The description should reflect clear activities that your organization will do to work towards the goal or objective. You should also have clear connections between activities, goals, and objectives (more about this below).



There are several questions your organization should consider when developing SMART goals and objectives. These include:

Specific: What do you want to accomplish? Why is this important? Who needs to be involved? Where will this take place?

Measurable: How will you measure progress? How will you know when your goal is achieved?

Actionable: What actions/activities will move you towards your goal? What resources do you need? Are these actions within your control?

Realistic: Is your goal realistic given the timeframe and available resources?

Time-bound: Are there smaller deadlines or checkpoints? What is the final deadline?

- **Realistic:** When considering the resources available, the proposed measurement can be achieved by your organization.
- **Time-bound:** A date or time window within which the goal or objective will be achieved. Consider the timeline of your project when developing your goals and objectives.

WHERE DOES SMART APPLY?

Grant applications include several different components that are necessary to demonstrate aspects of your work plan. Although a full discussion of developing work plans is outside the scope of this article, there are a few key components that should be considered when applying the SMART framework.

- Activities: the things that your organization is doing as part of the project.
- Goals: high-level direction your organization is focusing on for the project.
- Objectives: specific components that you will achieve to work towards your project goals.
- Outcomes: results of your proposed project.

Individual items within each of the categories should all connect to one or more items in each of the other categories. In other words, you should not do any activities that do not work towards your goals and will not be measured in objectives and outcomes.

Differentiating between goals, objectives, and outcomes is one of the trickiest parts of grant writing. In fact, there is a lot of ambiguity in the recommendations shared by various grants experts about the exact definitions of each of these components! However, the important thing to note is that every goal, objective, and outcome should be SMART so that you can clearly show funders when you have been successful with your project.

Although we will not develop a complete proposed project here, examples of some project components for a middle school robotics program might include:

- Activities: after-school robotics club, annual local robotics competition.
- Goals: have fifty middle school students from ABC School District participate in the annual robotics competition in June 2026.
- Objectives: train five parent volunteers in robotics curriculum during the Fall 2025 semester, enroll one hundred middle school students from ABC School District in the after-school robotics club during the Spring 2026 semester.
- Outcomes: forty-five middle school students from ABC School District will pass a robotics basics test given after the June 2026 annual robotics competition, forty students will note an interest in exploring STEM fields during the end-of-year survey.

WHY CONSIDER THE SMART FRAMEWORK FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS?

Grant funders want to know that their monies are being spent responsibly and that projects are achieving the outcomes set up in the grant program. A grant application is your opportunity to demonstrate why your project should be funded. Sharing a detailed work plan and a straightforward way to see when your project is successful will show grant makers your organization is ready to proceed with your proposed program. The SMART framework is a way to ensure that every component you are including in your project narrative is well-thought-out and ready for implementation.



Department of Justice Funding Cuts: Current and Future Impacts

Shannon Day, Senior Grants Development Consultant

CUTS TO CURRENT PROGRAMS

This spring, the Trump administration terminated approximately \$820 million in grant awards through the Department of Justice, eliminating 373 grants that had been awarded to 221 organizations across thirty-seven states. An [analysis by the Council on Criminal Justice](#) in May 2025 highlighted the extensive consequences of the Trump administration's decision to implement these cuts.

The impact of these funding cuts extends far beyond the primary grant recipients. The analysis uncovered an additional 362 organizations that were negatively affected as sub-awardees, raising the total number of impacted entities to 554 across forty-eight states and territories. The nonprofit sector withstood most of these cuts, with approximately 94% of the terminated funds having been allocated to nonprofit organizations.

The terminated subawards, valued at an estimated \$73 million, were intended to support a variety of critical services. These included community-based violence intervention programs, legal assistance for underserved crime victims, and services for individuals who have been victims of hate crimes. The analysis also underscores the loss of funding for law enforcement agencies in rural communities and for programs designed to combat substance abuse and reduce overdose deaths.

Funded projects that were rescinded fell under numerous grant programs, including Second Chance Act (SCA) programs, Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program (COSSAP), Rural Violent Crime Reduction Initiative (RVCI), STOP School Violence, and Encouraging Innovation projects.

CUTS TO FUTURE PROGRAMS

Although it will likely still go through various iterations before passage, **the president's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2026 cuts \$850 million from DOJ grant programs.** According to the [Council on Criminal Justice analysis](#), the

budget completely eliminates certain programs, including the Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative, the Justice Reinvestment Initiative, the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Program, and the Body Worn Camera Policy and Implementation Program.

The budget reduces funding for school safety, youth mentoring, sexual assault, and domestic violence programs. Grant programs that are expected to see a reduction in funding include the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) (9% cut), the School Violence Prevention Program (SVPP) (30% cut), and the STOP Violence Against Women Grant Program (25% cut).

The budget also proposes eliminating several Department of Justice funding offices, including the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), and the Office of Tribal Justice (OTJ). The latter two funding offices were established by federal law. The budget reduces appropriations to OVW and COPS by approximately \$280 million.

The president's proposed budget eliminates the Office on Violence Against Women and the Office of Community Oriented Policing.

Lawmakers from both sides of the aisle are pushing back, arguing that the steep reductions in funding will undermine public safety and unravel years of progress in crime reduction and community trust-building. This legislative resistance is being reinforced by a broad range of lobbying groups, including national law enforcement organizations and local community-based violence prevention programs. These groups contend that the cuts are shortsighted, warning that they will directly translate to fewer officers on the street, despite a proposed increase in funding for the COPS Hiring Program, the elimination of grants for essential de-escalation and crisis intervention training, and the defunding of vital support services for victims of crime.

Despite the unified opposition to these specific cuts, the overall outlook for public safety funding remains dim. The proposed reductions are just one component of a much larger, intensely contentious negotiation over the entire federal budget. With immense pressure to curb government spending and competing demands from other sectors, even programs with bipartisan backing are in a precarious position. Consequently, law enforcement agencies and community organizations are left in a state of uncertainty, bracing for a future where the resources needed to protect their communities may be severely diminished.

Climate for Success: How Positive Schools Attract Powerful Funding

Sam Rawdon, Grants Development Associate (K-12 Education)

CUTS TO CURRENT PROGRAMS

The overall atmosphere of a school—its values, relationships, and daily experiences—plays a critical role in shaping student outcomes, teacher well-being, and the broader educational environment. Known as school climate, this concept includes the quality of interactions among students, staff, and families; the sense of physical and emotional safety on campus; and the structures that support equity, inclusion, and student engagement. When the climate is positive, learning thrives. Students feel supported, behavior issues decline, and communities grow stronger. Increasingly, these outcomes are being recognized and rewarded through targeted grant funding from local, state, and federal sources.

A growing body of research confirms that students in positive school climates are more likely to attend school consistently, achieve academically, and develop healthy social-emotional skills. In contrast, when the school climate is poor, students may experience chronic absenteeism, disengagement, and increased disciplinary action. In response, many school leaders are investing in strategies that actively improve climates, such as social-emotional learning (SEL), restorative justice practices, trauma-informed approaches, and training in cultural responsiveness. These initiatives do more than help students; they also boost staff satisfaction and retention by fostering a more respectful and supportive school culture.

This widespread acknowledgment of the importance of school climate is shaping how educational funding is distributed. Major grant programs now prioritize school climate improvement as a key goal. For instance, Title IV, Part A of the federal Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) program provides funding for efforts like SEL implementation, mental health services, and student engagement programs. Similarly, the COPS School Violence Prevention Program (SVPP) supports

initiatives that enhance school safety and emotional well-being. At the state level, mental health and school safety grants often align with climate-enhancing goals. Many of these grants fund tools and strategies like anti-bullying programs, peer mentoring, climate surveys, and school-based mental health supports.

Increasingly, grant applications ask applicants to demonstrate how their proposals will improve school climate. Strong applications often include local climate data to justify funding needs or establish benchmarks for success. For example, a school might cite survey results showing elevated levels of student anxiety or low feelings of connectedness to argue for SEL programs or counseling services. Others may highlight disproportionate disciplinary outcomes to support restorative practice implementation. Funders are looking for holistic approaches that not only improve academic results but also create safer, more equitable, and more nurturing school environments.

Furthermore, school climate is often used as a key indicator of a grant program's effectiveness. Funders want to see measurable changes: fewer suspensions, improved teacher-student relationships, greater student engagement, or higher satisfaction ratings from families. Demonstrating growth in these areas can help schools renew funding or scale successful programs.

Ultimately, improving school climate is not just good practice; it is also a smart strategy for attracting resources. Schools that invest in their climate create stronger communities and are more competitive in the funding landscape. In today's education world, a thriving climate is both a foundation for success and a pathway to sustainable support.



Program Snapshot

Title IV, Part A: Student Success and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) Program



SUMMARY

Provides flexible formula funding to state and local education agencies (SEAs and LEAs) to improve student academic achievement by increasing the capacity of schools to provide access to a well-rounded education, improve school conditions for student learning (including school climate and safety), and improve the effective use of technology. Funds support a wide range of initiatives tailored to local needs.

Funding is available for the following allowable activities related to school safety and climate:

- Implementation of evidence-based programs that improve school climate (e.g., social-emotional learning, mental health support, and bullying prevention)
- Developing and implementing comprehensive school safety plans
- Training school personnel in crisis prevention and behavioral intervention strategies
- Supporting drug and violence prevention programs
- Improving access to school-based mental health services
- Addressing trauma-informed practices and restorative justice initiatives

Each SEA receives an allocation based on Title I formulas and is required to distribute at least 95% of the funding to LEAs. Funding levels vary by state and district. Over \$1.3 billion was allocated nationally in FY2024.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants include all SEAs and LEAs, including:

- Public school districts
- Public charter schools are considered LEAs
- Consortia of LEAs

DEADLINE

LEAs typically apply through their SEA. Deadlines vary by state but are generally in the spring or early summer. Ongoing planning and consultation with stakeholders are required.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

<https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/safe-supportive-schools/student-support-and-academic-enrichment-program/>

Back to Basics: How to Decide Whether or Not to Apply to a Specific Grant Opportunity

Sandy Trowbridge, Grants Development Associate

If you are responsible for securing grant funding for your organization, it can be tempting to want to apply to all grant opportunities that come across your desk. While it might seem as though more is better, the reality is that not all opportunities are worth your time, energy, and resources to pursue. Adoption of a simple go/no-go rubric when first considering whether to apply to a specific grant opportunity will allow you to be more strategic in your grant-seeking efforts.

GO/NO-GO RUBRIC

An example go/no-go rubric is included below. This example may be modified to best meet the needs of your organization. We suggest having the grant team complete the rubric and present their findings to the organization’s leadership. This is an opportunity to cross-check your findings and build leadership buy-in early in the application process.

Project Name:				
Grant Opportunity Name:				
Grant Opportunity Deadline:				
Grant Opportunity Award Range (\$ - \$\$):				
Grant Opportunity Program Page Hyperlink:				
Funder:				
Element	Questions	Related Considerations	GO	NO-GO
Eligibility	Is your organization eligible to apply according to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)?	Does your organization align with the required organization type? Does your organization’s location align with any geographic limitations? Etc. NOTE: Eligibility requirements are detailed within the NOFO. If it is still unclear, contact the funder to clarify before proceeding.		
Alignment	Have key team members read the NOFO in its entirety and confirmed both organizational and project alignment?	Does the opportunity align with your organization’s long-term vision, mission, goals, and priorities? Does the opportunity align with the needs and goals of the planned project (focus area, size, impact, etc.)?		

Element	Questions	Related Considerations	GO	NO-GO
Need	Will you be able to sufficiently demonstrate the need for the project you plan to propose under this NOFO?	Do you have research and data that illustrates this need? Will you be able to clearly show how the project will positively impact the broader community?		
Timeline	Do you believe it will be possible to compile a competitive application by the noted deadline given current staffing levels and workloads?	Do staff have the time/ bandwidth to take on an application endeavor of this size? Consider the application window, application length, required attachments (budgets, budget justifications, letters of support, etc.), required partnerships, etc.		
Expertise	If awarded, does your organization have the technical expertise and staffing levels required to successfully implement both the project itself AND the post-award requirements detailed within the NOFO?	Do you have staff available that are equipped to lead this effort (both application and implementation)? Will application to (or implementation of) this grant take staff away from other higher priority projects? Are staff equipped to manage the post-award requirements (procurement, accounting, reporting, etc.) if awarded? If not, will you be able to hire or provide staff training to fill this gap?		
Return on Investment (ROI)	Do you believe that the time and money required to compile the application will be worth the effort?	Is the cost of grant preparation (staff time, etc.) anticipated to be more or less than the value of the grant? Will the grant cover the full cost of the program (including reporting requirements, overhead, etc.) if awarded?		
Cost-Match	If there is a cost-match requirement, does organization leadership confirm availability of funds?	NOTE: If there is a cost-match component, this will be detailed in the NOFO.		

Element	Questions	Related Considerations	GO	NO-GO
Odds	Do you believe your organization can compile a competitive application?	<p>How competitive is the grant program? How many awards are anticipated? How many organizations typically apply?</p> <p>Do you believe you can stand out when considering others that are likely to apply?</p> <p>Can you clearly show how the need you propose to meet via the grant is greater than the needs of others?</p> <p>NOTE: Information on the number of awards anticipated is often provided within the NOFO itself or in accompanying grant program FAQs.</p>		
History	Does the funder's giving history align with your organization and project?	<p>Has the funder awarded organizations like yours in the past (organization type, geographic location, tax status, etc.)?</p> <p>Has the funder funded projects like yours in the past (project focus, project size, etc.)?</p> <p>NOTE: This info can often be found via a close review of the funder/grant program website and/or the funder's 990-PF tax form (if a foundation).</p>		
Registrations	Will you be able to adhere to any registration or certification requirements by the noted deadlines?	NOTE: Registration/certification requirements are typically detailed within the NOFO and/or on the funder's website.		

Element	Questions	Related Considerations	GO	NO-GO
Internal Policies and Procedures	Do you have well-documented internal policies and procedures in place that will enable the funder to be confident in your ability to manage any awarded funds?	<p>For example, do you utilize an accounting system that allows you to track costs separately by project and track staff time according to the project-specific level of effort?</p> <p>If considering a federal opportunity, are your internal policies and procedures all compliant with Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200)?</p> <p>NOTE: Many funders will assess an organization's capacity when making grant award decisions to ensure that you have the internal controls, personnel, and technology required to effectively manage the grant award and be good stewards of their funding.</p>		
Final Go / No-Go Decision:				
Executive Director Signature / Date:				
Grant Director Signature / Date:				

WHAT'S NEXT?

If all questions point to “go” and leadership approves, then you can be confident hitting the ground running in your application efforts. If a handful of questions point to “no-go,” pause and reconsider whether it makes sense to proceed. Is there a strategic reason to go for it anyway? Or are there other opportunities that your staff would be better served to focus on? If more than a few questions point to “no-go,” then you can be grateful that you did not waste time or money on an effort that was unlikely to result in award and instead redirect your energy to other more aligned options.

If interested in other foundational grants knowledge, be sure to check out “Back to Basics: Creating SMART Goals” on page 32. If interested in more information on actions that you can take at the pre-award stage to set yourself up well for post-award success (including nailing down internal policies and procedures), check out “Post-Award Considerations at the Pre-Award Stage from our May 2025 Funded issue.

Upcoming Grantcasts

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 Grantcasts.

New Grant Opportunities for Transportation Security: Federal & State Funding Strategies for 2025

A Grants Office Production, Sponsored by Genetec

Date: August 6, 2025

About: Join Grants Office experts, along with special guests from Genetec, for a high-level overview of security solutions and the funds that will help pay for them, including eligibility requirements, key objectives, deadlines, and where the current administration will prioritize funding now and into the future.

Register [HERE](#)

Cybersecurity Grant Funding Strategies for Schools, Public Safety, and Government Agencies

A Grants Office Production, Sponsored by Check Point

Date: August 12, 2025

About: Join Grants Office and cybersecurity leader Check Point for an in-depth discussion where we'll explore strategies for identifying and winning cybersecurity grants, as well as securing funding for IT infrastructure, network security, emergency response systems, and more. You'll gain actionable insights into how to make cybersecurity a central—and fundable—part of your technology projects.

Register [HERE](#)

Meeting the Moment: How Higher Ed Institutions Can Compete for Grant Funding

A Grants Office Production

Date: August 19, 2025

About: Join us to learn how colleges and universities can rise to the challenge by identifying the right opportunities, aligning proposals with funder priorities, and building competitive, compelling applications. We'll highlight key funding areas, including research infrastructure, student success initiatives, technology modernization, and workforce partnerships, and share actionable strategies for positioning your institution to win.

Register [HERE](#)



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The Art of the Ask: Designing Fundable Projects and Writing Powerful Grant Narratives for Nonprofits

A Grants Office Production, Sponsored by Ingram Micro

About: Join experts from Grants Office and special guests from Ingram Micro to learn how to develop a grant-ready project and strategically identify technology-friendly grants that align with your nonprofit organization's specific needs. You'll gain practical insight that will help you build stronger, more fundable projects and navigate the grants landscape with confidence. If your nonprofit is looking to utilize grant funding to upgrade its cloud infrastructure to better support its mission, be sure to attend this event!

[Access HERE](#)

Fuel Your Pipeline: Harness Manufacturing Funding to Modernize and Secure Facilities

A Grants Office Production, Sponsored by Cisco

About: Join Sherry Cathcart Chavis, Cisco Public Funding Office; David Gutshall, Cisco Industrial IoT & Security Account Executive; and Joseph Phelan, Grants Office, LLC, to explore key funding opportunities, learn how evolving priorities under the new Administration impact funding, and implement best practice strategies for successful grant seeking.

[Access HERE](#)

Unlocking K-12 Funding Opportunities: A Quick Guide to Grant Success

A Grants Office Production

About: Join us to learn the best funding opportunities for K-12 initiatives, what funders are looking for in successful applications, and key strategies for building strong, sustainable projects. Whether you're targeting technology upgrades, student support services, facility improvements, or career readiness programs, this session will give you a clear, actionable path to securing grants that make a real difference for your students and community. Don't miss this quick overview designed to jumpstart your K-12 funding success!

[Access HERE](#)

No Budget, No Problem: Navigating Canadian Federal Funding in 2025

A Grants Office Production

About: Join us for an informative and forward-looking webinar exploring how this change affects the funding landscape in 2025. We'll discuss the implications for nonprofits, academic institutions, and businesses alike, while highlighting alternative funding mechanisms such as supplementary estimates and the fall economic statement. We'll also dive into other sources of funding at smaller scales, including provincial, municipal, and community-based opportunities. Importantly, we will explore how similar situations have unfolded in the past, and what you can do now to stay proactive and funding-ready in a year without a formal budget.

[Access HERE](#)



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