FUNDED

THIS CONTENT IS **HUMAN** POWERED

Nonprofit Security Grant Program Best Practices

Also: Funding for K-12 Institutions, FIFA World Cup and America 250, Part 5 of our series on Tribal Funding, a look at the 2025 Canadian Budget, Part 3 of our series on Healthcare Funding, and much more...

In This Issue

Dear reader,

The grants landscape is constantly shifting, which is why we here at Grants Office are dedicated to ensuring that grantseekers have the resources they need to stay up to date on all things grants. This edition of FUNDED is a good example of that, with updates and tips for navigating funding for everything from one-time initiatives in preparation for the FIFA World Cup to supporting the ongoing development needs of universities and Tribal communities. We've also got actionable strategies for K-12 and healthcare, as well as commercial interests in SBIR grants and electric vehicle infrastructure.

We aim to have something for everyone, and I think you will find something you can use within these pages. Of course, the updates and strategies we discuss in FUNDED are only one part of the Grants Office suite of offerings we provide to take your agency's grantseeking to the next level. Many of these are free, and the rest are (we believe) well worth the cost. If you prefer visuals, I refer you to the back cover.

The political context in which all this is happening is on everyone's mind, and to cut through the noise and focus specifically on what these developments mean for grants, the Grants Office hosts and maintains a free, dedicated web page on the latest developments in federal funding. It's just another easy way to stay on top of what's happening out there that could impact your day-to-day grants development efforts.

For ongoing management of your grant searches and an easy way to manage all the projects, related grants, collaborators, and links associated with your grants development operation, check out Grants Office Communities, a subscription platform we believe it will transform how grantseekers across the public sector *find* federal, state, and foundation grant opportunities and *manage* their projects, teams, and proposals. There's a **free 2-week trial** and subscription levels for both individuals and teams.

Be sure to check out the timely and informative Grantscasts our team has presented this year, and register for the ones to come. These are also free to attend and available to everyone, so be sure to invite colleagues and friends, anyone you feel might benefit from the deeply researched and experience-driven intelligence we are presenting.

And 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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in Grants Office

FREE UPCOMING GRANTSCASTS:

Feb. 18, 2026

Winning the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP): Strategies to Strengthen Your Application

Feb. 24, 2026

Distance Learning Funding Made Simple: A DLT Workshop for Education Institutions

Feb. 25, 2026

Telehealth Funding Made Simple: A DLT Grant Workshop for Healthcare Organizations

Feb. 26, 2026

Getting Started with Grants.gov: Finding and Applying for Federal Grants

For more:

grantsoffice.com/Learn-from-Us/Watch-a-Grantscast

Bridging Bonds and Grants: Comprehensive Funding for Public K–12 Institutions

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

Public schools rely on a complex mix of funding streams, each playing a different role in supporting daily operations, innovative programming, and long-term growth. Among these funding sources, two require a compelling case to be made for student and community benefit before they can be used. These two funding mechanisms are known as public school bonds and competitive grant funding. Unlike more routine sources of revenue, bonds and grants are not guaranteed. Both require districts to articulate a clear vision, demonstrate need through various assessments, and must be explained to a variety of stakeholders as to why a current investment will matter in the future. Voters must be convinced that a bond will strengthen their schools and communities, just as funders must be persuaded that their grant will lead to meaningful, sustainable outcomes. Luckily, the extensive planning required to pass a school bond can be used to build the foundation of a strong grant application.

THE ROLE OF BONDS: FINANCING PHYSICAL SPACE

School bonds are a resource that public school districts use to fund major capital projects that cannot be covered through their daily operating budget. Often compared to a home mortgage, bonds allow districts to borrow funds up front to make large-scale improvements. Bond funding is typically limited to long-term capital investments, such as:

- Constructing new school buildings
- Renovating or modernizing existing facilities
- Replacing major infrastructure systems such as HVAC, roofing, and electrical
- Purchasing buses and other vehicles
- Addressing large-scale safety and technology infrastructure needs

What bonds cannot fund is equally important to understand. By law, bonds are generally prohibited from supporting things like salaries, classroom supplies, utilities, or other day-to-day operational expenses.

Because these borrowed funds are paid back through local property taxes, school bonds require voter approval—placing long-term investment decisions directly in the hands of the community.

THE ROLE OF GRANTS: BUILDING CAPACITY INSIDE BOND-FUNDED SPACES

While bonds may fund the physical spaces for learning, grants fund the programs, people, and services that happen inside those spaces. Rather than focusing on specific capital expenditures, grants support things like classroom materials and instructional resources, professional development and staff salaries, hardware and software, student support services, and even certain physical security improvements that fall outside the scope of bond eligibility. These expenditures may only be funded if they align with the initiatives and priorities set out by the grant maker. Common priority areas for state and federal education grant makers include career and technical education, STEM education, mental health and student wellness, school safety, and professional development. Private education grant makers commonly prioritize special education, reading and literacy, afterschool programs, classroom materials, and broader innovative education practices.

Although grant programs do not require the same level of community buy-in as a bond election, districts must still persuade grant makers that their proposed project is necessary, strategic, and capable of delivering meaningful benefits. Whether the impact is measured through improved student outcomes, stronger instructional practice, expanded access to services, or enhanced learning conditions, grant makers—like voters—expect unambiguous evidence that an investment will serve students and the broader community.

IMPORTANCE OF ALIGNMENT

When bonds and grants are planned in isolation, districts risk underutilized facilities or fragmented initiatives. When aligned strategically, they form a comprehensive budget that supports equity, innovation, and sustainability. Aligning bond planning with grant-seeking efforts requires leadership and coordination both internally and across the community. The key to aligning these two efforts is to leverage all the planning work that went into one initiative and use it to strengthen the other initiative. For example, the data, needs assessments, community input, and strategic priorities developed during the bond planning process often align directly with what grant makers are looking for in a grant application. For instance, a bond-funded STEM facility can be paired with a grant program that supports teacher training and instructional equipment. So while the bond will cover the space itself, the topics that were discussed and shared with the community about how important this space will be for students can also be used in the grant application that discusses the importance of educator preparation, STEM pathway opportunities, and the necessary equipment to bring the lab to life.

STRATEGIES FOR MAXIMIZING THE IMPACT OF THESE TWO FUNDING SOURCES:

Identifying grant opportunities that align with voter-approved bond priorities

Once a bond is approved, the district has a clear, community-endorsed set of priorities. Identifying grant opportunities that align with those priorities allows districts to build on existing momentum rather than introducing disconnected initiatives.

Using bond planning data and community engagement outcomes to strengthen grant proposal narratives

Rather than recreating the work that was put into a school bond campaign, districts should intentionally reuse and adapt it to support their grant narratives. Community engagement outcomes can provide evidence of local need and buy-in, which funders often seek.

Phasing grant opportunities to coincide with the rollout of a bond-funded facility

Timing matters when blending funding sources. Phasing grant efforts so they align with the completion of a bond-funded facility, allows districts to implement programs when they can have the greatest impact. For example, grant funding for professional development or instructional materials can be pursued as construction nears completion, ensuring staff and students are prepared to fully utilize new spaces from day one. This approach supports smoother implementation and demonstrates thoughtful coordination of resources to both voters and funders.

Maintaining a comprehensive budget to reduce reliance on any single funding source

Relying too heavily on one funding stream can limit spending flexibility and increase financial risk. A diversified budget allows districts to respond to changing priorities, funding cycles, and economic conditions.

Bonds and grants are powerful tools on their own, but their true impact is realized when they are intentionally aligned. Bonds allow communities to invest in the physical environments where learning takes place, while grants provide the flexibility needed to support the people, programs, and practices that bring those spaces to life.

Update on National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Funds

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

During 2025, the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) program underwent changes. NEVI, which was introduced as part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law in late 2021, allocated $5 billion to states and territories to build charging stations as well as boost the development of electric vehicles. Last February, the Trump administration announced plans to terminate the program through an executive order that incorporated internal reviews of various energy and transportation policies. A federal judge, in June, ordered them to roll back that executive order. Eventually, in August, the Federal Highway Administration (under the Department of Transportation) announced new guidelines for the NEVI program. States submitted plans for funds in September, with at least forty-two receiving approvals on how they will spend remaining funds.

In the August guidance established by the Federal Highway Administration, funds could be used for installing or upgrading charging stations; traffic control devices or signage to direct drivers to charging locations; any preliminary engineering studies; and creating analysis activities to better evaluate the current and future locations of charging stations.

The guidelines stressed three components to be included in state plans.

1. Description of how the entity will use NEVI funds for each fiscal year, such as specific projects, buildout locations, and status of grant solicitations

2. A Community Engagement Outcomes report, which dives into the numerous presentations, webinars, Q&A sessions, conferences, and conversations states have hosted to better inform the community about NEVI

3. Description of physical and cybersecurity strategies to ensure safety has been considered

States are busy setting new deadlines for the buildout of stations.

Here are examples of upcoming deadlines:

State	Deadline
California	March 25, 2026
Colorado	Expected Spring 2026
District of Columbia	Expected Early 2026
Minnesota	Expected Early 2026

*Visit your state's transportation or energy agency website for additional information.

Charging stations had already begun being installed across the country, beginning in late 2023 with a buildout in Ohio. According to information from EV States Clearinghouse, eighteen states have at least one station in operation. Of the $3.3 billion allocated through FY 2025, only $607 million has been awarded by states, so there is still plenty to come from these funds. As of now, forty-four states have issued a notice of funding opportunity, with thirty-eight issuing awards. The majority of these happened within the years of 2023 and 2024, and with the program under scrutiny, progress was halted to a degree, but now that things are moving forward again, more charging stations are anticipated to be built this year and into the future.

Tribal Funding Series Part 5: Building Stronger Nations: Grant Opportunities Advancing Tribal Culture, Economy, and Infrastructure

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

For many U.S. tribes, the path forward involves striking a balance between modern infrastructure and economic opportunities, while preserving their cultural identity. Grant funding from public and private sources is empowering Indigenous nations to preserve tribal heritage, advance economic growth, and modernize infrastructure. More than just a financial boost, these grants are essential tools for achieving long-term prosperity and tribal sovereignty.

Three areas of interest are:

1. Preserving culture and revitalizing traditions

2. Strengthening tribal economies

3. Infrastructure improvements

PRESERVING CULTURE AND REVITALIZING TRADITIONS

Cultural preservation is central to the strength of tribal nations. By supporting cultural infrastructure, tribal nations reinforce identity, educate younger generations, and share their heritage with broader audiences. Dedicated grant programs provide the essential resources for tribes to protect and promote their unique cultural heritage and traditions.

The Historic Preservation Fund: Tribal Heritage Grants

This grant provides funds through the National Park Service (NPS) for cultural and historic preservation projects. Projects include locating and identifying culturally relevant archaeological sites; preserving tribally owned buildings; stabilizing and protecting archaeological sites; documenting cultural traditions and preserving oral history; and cultural education initiatives.

Tribal Cultural Grant

In addition to Federal funding opportunities, several states have created their own programs. Washington State has several tribal grant programs, including the Tribal Cultural Grant. In 2026, funds will be distributed through a series of grants for a broad range of cultural and arts-related activities and programs. The initial funding rounds supported a variety of impactful projects, from regalia-making supplies and instruction to the creation of a tribal language dictionary and children's books. It also supported cultural teacher salaries, murals, and artwork for a tribal youth and health center, a Lushootseed language camp, and numerous other community-driven efforts.

STRENGTHENING TRIBAL ECONOMIES

Strong economic and business development is a key driver of tribal sovereignty, enabling financial independence and sustainable governance. Using grants to invest in diversified industries, including renewable energy, agriculture, technology, and small businesses, tribal nations can reduce reliance on external funding while creating meaningful employment for their citizens. These efforts generate more than revenue; they provide resources that can be reinvested in essential services like healthcare, education, and social programs, fostering community-driven growth.

The Tribal Tourism Grant Program (TTGP)

Created by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), The Tribal Tourism Grant Program funds projects to conduct feasibility studies and develop business plans. Funds may also be used for upgrades to travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation infrastructure: interpretation costs; brochures, digital enhancements, and website development; arts and culture events like festivals, museums, historical sites, art shows, or concerts; and workforce training that supports travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation.

The Tribal Business Development Grant (Montana)

This is a competitive grant program that supports Montana tribes by providing resources for advancing shovel-ready projects, resulting in positive economic impacts for tribal communities. Funds may be used to establish new businesses or improve existing ones; to purchase property for business development; and to purchase equipment for business purposes.

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Modern infrastructure is the essential foundation upon which tribal sovereignty and a robust community are built. Grant funding is critical to tribal infrastructure, providing the capital needed to address decades of systemic underinvestment. Because tribal lands often face unique jurisdictional and geographic challenges, securing traditional financing can be difficult. Federal and private grants bridge this gap by funding essential projects, including improved connectivity, reliable power grids, safe housing, and a modern transportation infrastructure.

Tribal Broadband Connectivity Grant Program

Funded through the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Grant Program is a $3 billion program aimed at assisting Tribal Governments, Tribal Colleges and Universities, Tribal Organizations and Native Corporations, and the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to be used for broadband deployment on tribal lands. Additionally, funds may be used for telehealth, distance learning, broadband affordability, and adoption.

Tribal Transportation Program Safety Funds (TTPSF)

These funds address the prevention and reduction of death or serious injuries in transportation-related incidents, such as motor vehicle crashes and pedestrian fatalities. Eligible projects include improvements to intersections and railway crossings; upgrades to roadway signage; enhancements to traffic control devices; improvements to pedestrian safety features; and the collection, analysis, and improvement of safety data.

Grants are essential tools for empowerment, moving beyond financial aid to help tribes expand their economies and preserve their history. This funding builds the critical infrastructure, from business to broadband. Tribes that maintain dedicated grant offices and planning departments are better prepared to secure funding, manage complex initiatives, and ensure alignment with long-term community goals.

These grant opportunities represent a bridge between a venerated past and a thriving future. By securing the resources needed to protect their heritage, grow their economies, and build modern infrastructure, tribal nations are doing more than just completing projects; they are exercising their sovereignty.

Program Snapshot

Tribal Broadband Connectivity Grant Program

SUMMARY

The purpose of the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program is to improve the quality of life, spur economic development and commercial activity, create opportunities for remote employment and online entrepreneurship, remote learning, and telehealth by expanding broadband access and providing digital training and inclusion programs to Native American communities.

- Broadband infrastructure deployment projects
- Providing free or reduced-cost broadband service and preventing disconnection of existing broadband service
- Distance learning and telehealth
- Digital equity planning and workforce development activities

FUNDING

Approximately $90 million in total funding is available. There is no matching requirement.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible entities are a Tribal Government, a Tribal College or University (TCU), the Department of Hawaiian Homelands on behalf of the Native Hawaiian Community, including Native Hawaiian Education Programs, a Tribal organization, or a Native Corporation.
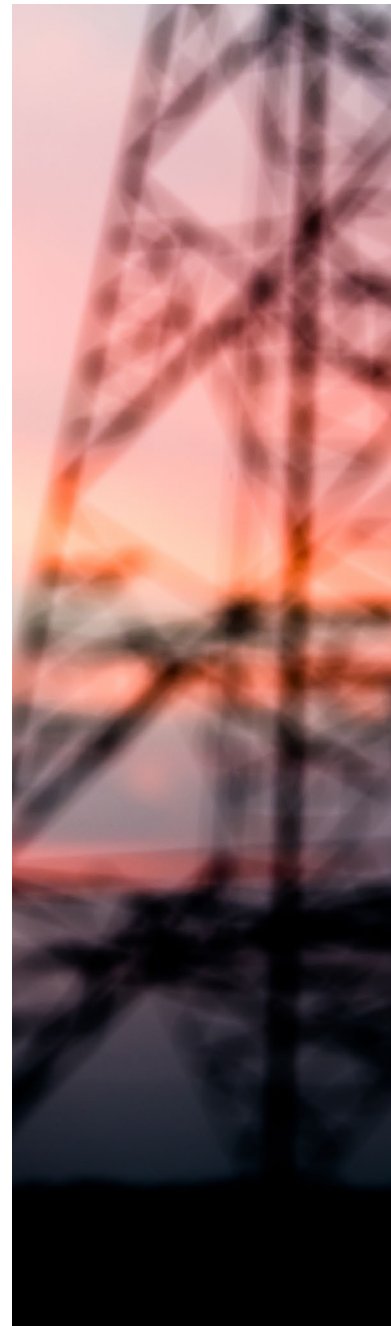
DEADLINE

Round 3 applications are expected to open in Spring of 2026.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://communities.grantsoffice.com/s/grant/a0B5a00000UY1cQEAT/tribal-broadband-connectivity-grant-program

https://broadbandusa.ntia.gov/funding-programs/tribal-broadband-connectivity

Program Snapshot

Tribal Transportation Program Safety Funds (TTPSF)

SUMMARY

Awarded annually, projects are chosen whose outcomes will address the prevention and reduction of death or serious injuries in transportation-related incidents, such as motor vehicle crashes.

Funding is available in the following categories:

- Intersection safety improvements

- Improvements for pedestrian or bicyclist safety or safety of people with disabilities

- Construction or installation of features, measures, and road designs to calm traffic and reduce vehicle speeds.

- Installation of a traffic control or other warning device at a location with high crash potential.

- Installation or upgrades of traffic control devices for pedestrians and bicyclists, including pedestrian hybrid beacons and the addition of bicycle movement phases to traffic signals.

- A pedestrian security feature designed to slow or stop a motor vehicle.

FUNDING

Approximately $25 million in total funding is available for FY26. Approximately 100 awards will be made. There is no matching requirement.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants are federally recognized tribes identified on the list of Indian Entities Recognized and Eligible to Receive Services from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

DEADLINE

Future application deadlines are TBA.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://communities.grantsoffice.com/s/grant/a0B0b00000MaeM7EAJ/tribal-transportation-program-safety-funds-ttpsf

https://highways.dot.gov/federal-lands/tribal/safety/funds

Are You on the Right Frequency? How to Fine-Tune Your Organization's Grant Search

Ashley Schultz, Manager of Community Engagement

Long before the days of internet radio, there was a specific art to tuning an analog dial. You needed a delicate touch to find that perfect spot where the static dropped away, and the music came through sharp and clear. If your dial was even a fraction off, the signal was lost. You knew the radio station was playing your favorite song, but you could not enjoy it.

Searching for grants works similarly. Hundreds of millions of dollars are broadcast by federal, state, and foundation organizations each year, but if you do not tune in to the right channels, you will never know they exist. Many of the frustrations grantseekers share with the team at Grants Office do not stem from the perceived lack of available funds, but from organizations positioning their grant search 'dial' to the wrong frequencies.

Is your search full of static? When you crank the volume on an untuned radio, your favorite song is interrupted by jumbled snippets of different music and another station's commercial break. In the world of grant seeking, this is exactly what happens when your search terms are too generic.

If you type a broad keyword like "Education" into a grant database, you are going to be met with a wall of noise. You might be looking to buy classroom tablets in Ohio, but your relevant results are buried alongside hundreds of grants for PhD fellowships in New York, teacher professional development grants in Arizona, and university construction grants in California. The right opportunity is technically there, but the background noise is so loud that you will close the webpage from search fatigue before you find it.

Or are you hitting dead air? If you search for "iPads for robotics club in Columbus," you may get only a few, if any, results. You have made your search terms so precise that the grant catalog cannot connect your specific product requests to the more generic broadcasts of "STEM" or "Digital Literacy" from the funders. You are likely to find that silence is discouraging - potentially leading you to conclude that there is simply no funding available for your project.

PRO TIP:

Grantmakers fund solutions, not shopping carts.

It is rare to find a grant named after a piece of equipment or single line item in your budget (e.g., "The School Laptop Grant"). More often, federal, state, and foundation funders focus their support on the outcomes that purchases could generate.

When choosing your keywords, avoid fixating on what you need to buy and shift your thoughts to what problem you need to solve. The funder does not particularly care about buying a new van. They care that seniors in your community cannot get to their doctor's appointments. If you search for an item, you get silence. If you search for a solution, you get results.

FINDING THE RIGHT FUNDING FREQUENCY.

To lock onto your organization's frequency and ensure you see relevant opportunities without too much background noise, consider brushing up on your analog radio skills and adjusting the dials inside your preferred grant database(s).

Tip #1 | Review Your Current Search Terms and Adjust

Searching is an inherently iterative process. When exploring a grants database for the first time, consider your first search as a starting point – or a testing ground – to understand how the platform works and what kinds of results you should expect moving forward.

As you proceed in later rounds of funding searches, do not forget to pause and adjust your terms before you start opening hundreds of Notices of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs). If you find yourself drowning in over 1,000 results, take a moment to fine-tune your focus and get more specific (e.g., changing your search for "Mental Health" to "Youth Behavioral Health"). On the other hand, if you hit a pocket of dead air with fewer than ten relevant results, consider broadening the scope of your keywords (e.g., changing "iPads" to its more generic "tablets" or the education industry standard "one-to-one").

And if you are still struggling, consider checking adjacent channels that use synonyms of your current search terms. A state funder may support "Job Training" activities, for example, but they may be broadcasting their support with words like "Workforce Development" or "Business Development" instead.

Tip #2 | Think Like a Funder

One of the biggest challenges to a successful search is understanding the difference between what you need to purchase with funding and what a grantmaker wants to achieve by sharing its resources. Grantseekers often search for a specific shopping list of items (e.g., body-worn cameras, security alarms, cybersecurity software), while funders trend towards language specific to their desired outcomes (e.g., improved rural health; increased transparency; better test scores) and the specific population groups, geographic regions, and/or innovative practices they want to see supported along the way.

Be sure your search terms effectively translate your organization's internal needs into those that a funder wants to hear. For instance, if you need funding for new playground equipment, look for grants supporting "Community Development" or "Nutrition & Wellness." Similarly, a request for downtown Wi-Fi could fall under the broader funder umbrellas of "Tourism" or "Smart Cities," while staffing costs for a telemedicine program could be framed as "Rural Development." By searching for the solution rather than the line item, you align your grantseeking dial to funders' frequencies.

Tip #3 | Use the Presets

Sometimes, the best way to start thinking like a funder is to simply look at the buttons they have installed on the dashboard of their grants database to see how they categorize the world. If multiple rounds of searching are giving you too much static, try using the "Browse by Category" feature found in most online funding sites.

By selecting a pre-defined category like "Human Services," "Arts & Culture," or "Higher Education," you are tapping directly into the taxonomy the database uses to organize its grant programs. This approach guarantees you are tuned into a valid frequency without the risk that a specific keyword typo or a missing synonym is hiding opportunities from you.

Tip #4 | Master Boolean Operators

To take more control over your search results, consider utilizing Boolean operators. These simple logic commands allow you to build more complex queries that explicitly tell the database what to include and what to ignore.
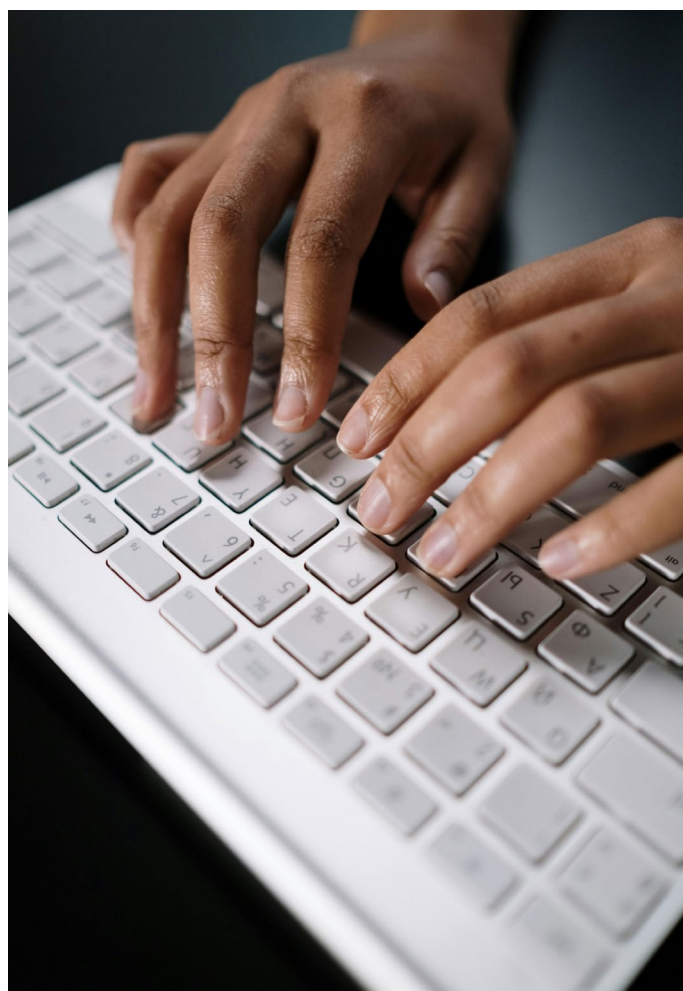
Operator	Action	Search Example
AND	Narrow results. Use this operator to ensure that both terms appear in the search results.	"Arts" AND "Rural"
OR	Broaden results. Use this operator to ensure at least one term appears in a single search effort.	"Mental Health" OR "Behavioral Health"
NOT	Exclude results. Use this operator to remove specific words that are cluttering your results.	"Education" NOT "Scholarship"
" "	Find an exact phrase. Use this operator to force the database to find these words together, in this specific order.	"Professional Development"
( )	Group commands. Use this operator to instruct the system to process your request inside the parentheses first (like a math equation).	("Arts" OR "Culture") AND "Youth"
* (Asterisk)	Leverage root words. Use this operator to find both the root word and all derivatives.	Child* (Finds: Child, Children, Childhood)

Mastering these operators transforms a simple keyword search into a precise filter. By explicitly telling the database what to keep and what to cut, you ensure that the only signal coming through is the one you want to hear.

Tip #5 | Respect the Search Venue

Remember that not all radios work the same way. A common mistake is treating a specialized grant database exactly like Google. Google is built for natural language and loves long conversational prompts like "Where can I find grants for a fire station?"

Grant databases, however, more often rely on structured data. When using specialized databases like the US government's www.grants.gov, or Grants Office's new platform Communities, shorter is often better. Instead of typing a long sentence, rely on these systems' built-in filters (e.g., Geography, Eligibility, Funder Type) to do the heavy lifting. Once you've fully leveraged those presets, find a single, sharp keyword to finish your fine-tuning.

Tip #6 | Don't be Afraid to Start Over

If you have tried every combination of keywords and filters and have yet to see the perfect list of funding opportunities, it might be time to step away from the database entirely.

Remember that a grants database is only an aggregated snapshot of funds available at that moment in time. Searching these catalogs should not be considered a replacement for researching and understanding the funding landscape as a whole.

If you find a grantmaker that looks like a potential match in the database, but you are not finding a specific grant opportunity that aligns with your needs, visit their website. While you are there, review their press releases, read their strategic plan, and look at their recent awards list. You may discover that while they do not fund your search query for "After School Reading," they do support "Workforce Readiness," allowing you to adjust your project focus accordingly.

Finally, accept that consistent silence may be a signal in itself: funding might not currently exist for your specific project or organization type. When this happens, no amount of keyword tweaking will force a result. Instead, bring your leadership team together and head back to the drawing board. You may need to retool the project's scope, find a partner organization to expand your eligibility, or completely rethink your approach to align with what funders are supporting in today's landscape.

PRO TIP:

Automate Your Listening

The modern world does not require you to sit by the radio 24/7 to catch your favorite song. Once you have fine-tuned your keywords and filters to get that perfect list of results, save your search.

Most grant databases allow you to save your criteria and set up email alerts. Let the database do the work for you, notifying you only when a new opportunity starts broadcasting on your specific frequency.

Ultimately, the goal of refining your grant search is not just to generate a lengthy list of potential funders – it is to uncover the ideal fiscal resources that help your organization move its mission forward. By filtering out the dead air and static, you save your most valuable resource: your mental energy.

Instead of burning out on the search, you can channel that energy into writing the proposal, building the relationship, and executing successful projects. The opportunities are out there. You just need to be on the right frequency to find them.

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Basics

Dr. Liz Shay, Senior Grants Development Consultant

The Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program is the largest and most significant source of research and development (R&D) funding for entrepreneurs in the United States. SBIR and its sister program, Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR), invest $4 billion each year from eleven federal funding agencies to support R&D initiatives. These funds come from mandatory set-asides from these federal agencies' total R&D budgets.

There are four main goals of the SBIR program:

1. **Stimulate technological innovation:** SBIR provides high-risk, non-dilutive capital for early-stage R&D for innovations that are often considered too nascent or unproven for traditional private investors.

2. **Meet federal R&D needs:** SBIR creates a direct link between innovations from small businesses and specific high-priority technology gaps identified by one or more federal agencies.

3. **Increase private-sector commercialization:** SBIR enables the federal government to validate technological innovations from small businesses. This approach de-risks the innovations for private capital, encouraging future investment.

4. **Encourage participation from a diverse base of entrepreneurs:** SBIR has funds set aside from the total pool specifically for small businesses led by women or socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.

SBIR PROJECT PHASES

The Small Business Administration (SBA) manages the overall SBIR program, which they divide into three phases. Grants can fund Phase I and Phase II projects, with the goal of preparing a business to be ready to pursue venture capital or other sources of funding.

Phase I is the feasibility and concept component of the R&D project. During this phase, your business should establish technical merit, feasibility, and commercial potential. Usually, grant funds are used for activities such as proof-of-concept research, feasibility studies, laboratory work, and prototyping.

Phase II is the prototype development component of the R&D project. During this phase, your business should continue R&D efforts initiated in Phase I, working towards a final product. Usually, grant funds are used for activities such as full-scale R&D, prototype refinement, rigorous testing, and initial evaluation of commercialization strategies.

Phase III is the commercialization component of the R&D project. During this phase, your business should pursue commercial application of your innovation and bring the product or service to market. Importantly, there is no SBIR funding at this stage. Instead, your business will use the outputs of the Phase I and Phase II projects to pursue non-federal funding, such as venture capital.

The SBA defines the process of applying to Phase I (and sometimes Phase II) applications as Phase 0. Although there is no federal funding for this component, there are several states that provide cash grants and/or cover the expenses associated with specialized assistance for SBIR/STTR applicants for the proposal development process. Some states and local governments also provide matching funds for Phase I or Phase II applications to expand the scope of the project. Check out your state to see if you can get this additional support!

SBIR ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

As you decide if SBIR is a good fit for your business, there are a few eligibility considerations that are important to consider:

Organization Type	Project Type
• For-profit entity • Federally registered (active Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)) • Located in the U.S. • Owned and controlled by U.S. citizens or permanent residents • Fewer than five hundred employees (including affiliates). **Note:** most competitive applications have fewer than ten employees	• Aligned with one of the eleven federal agencies and one or more of that agency's priority areas • Prepared to create a proof-of-concept for your innovation within 6-12 months of project start • Business plan showing pathway to commercialization • Evidence of market need

NEXT STEPS

The SBIR program provides a great opportunity for non-dilutive R&D funding for your small business. Explore the eleven funding agencies and their priorities. If your small business is well-aligned with the priorities of the SBIR program and one of the agencies participating in the program, then review their particular SBIR application procedures! Every agency operates on different timelines, sometimes with multiple solicitations based on priority areas, so read everything carefully. SBIR applications look quite similar to processes for other grant programs, so check out other Grants Office resources (and other articles in this issue!) for additional tips to help you prepare your project and proposal.

FEDERAL AGENCIES PARTICIPATING IN THE SBIR PROGRAM

Federal Agency	Annual Budget	Phase I Awards	Phase II Awards	Priority Areas
Department of Agriculture	$42 million	$125,000-$175,000	$600,000	Forest Resources, Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation, Food Science & Nutrition, etc.
Department of Commerce	$15 million	$100,000	$400,000	Ocean & Atmospheric Research, Quantum Technologies, Semiconductors, etc.
Department of Defense	$2.3 billion	$50,000-$250,000	$800,000-$1.8 million	Advanced Communications, Biotechnology, Microelectronics, Quantum Sciences, etc.
Department of Energy	$315 million	$200,000-$250,000	$1.1 million-$1.6 million	Environmental Management, Fossil Energy, Fusion Energy Science, Cybersecurity, etc.
Department of Education	$10 million	$250,000	$1 million	Education Technology, Teaching & Learning Supports, etc.
Department of Health and Human Services	$1.2 billion	$275,000+	$1.8 million	Health, Life Science, Biomedical, etc.
Department of Homeland Security	$18 million	$150,000	$1 million	Borders & Maritime Security, Critical Infrastructure & Resilience, Cybersecurity, etc.
Department of Transportation	$9 million	$200,000	$1 million	Traffic Safety, Smart Transportation, etc.
Environmental Protection Agency	$5 million	$100,00	$400,000	Air Quality, Homeland Security, Safe Chemicals, etc.
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	$174 million	$150,000	$1 million	Propulsion Systems, Aerospace Power & Energy Storage, Communications, etc.
National Science Foundation	$174 million	$300,000	$1.25 million	Artificial Intelligence, Quantum Information Science, Biotechnology & Translation Science, etc.

Project Highlight

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)

FUNDED ORGANIZATION

Academic Web Pages, Inc.

PROJECT TITLE

"SBIR Phase I: Integrating MentorAI into a student success platform"

AMOUNT FUNDED

$286,418

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project addresses the critical need for scalable, personalized student support in higher education. The goal is to build an artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted mentoring platform that will add to peer mentoring programs by providing data-informed, evidence-based guidance. This innovation will combine AI capabilities with human peer mentors, advancing our understanding of how to leverage AI tools within the context of human interactions. Institutions of higher education can use this solution to affordably scale high-quality, site-specific support services that improve student retention and success, advance the health and well-being of students, improve academic achievement, and aid in the economic prosperity of marginalized students.

The SBIR project will develop and validate the solution, focused on an integration of large language models with retrieval-augmented generation technology. Outputs are designed to enhance peer mentoring effectiveness. Technical challenges include securing data integration, conducting model fine-tuning, and scaling system architecture. Final commercial implementations will integrate institution-specific information, enabling customization for specific institutional contexts. By the end of the project period, the project team anticipates having a fully operational prototype demonstrating secure integration of multiple data sources, personalized recommendation generation, and scalable performance under peak usage conditions.
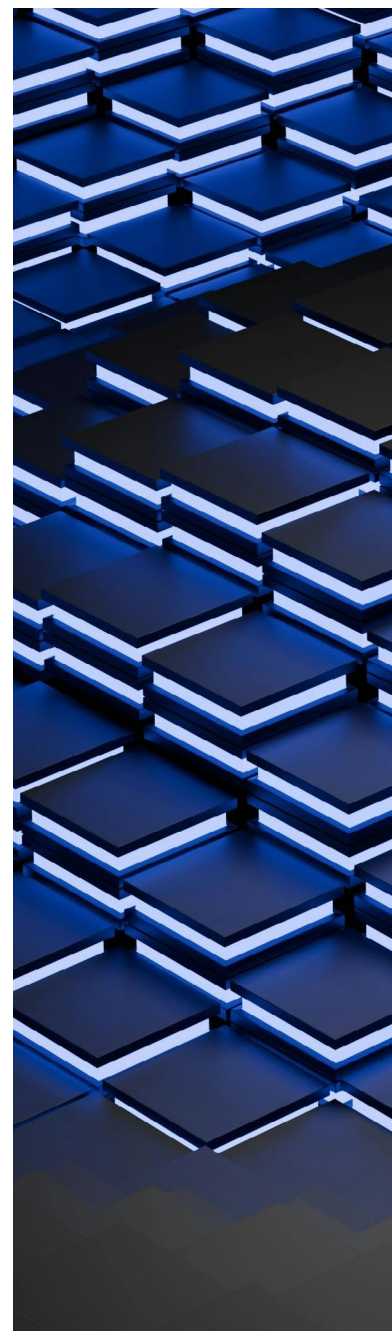
FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION

https://communities.grantsoffice.com/s/grant/a0B0b00000JEa3lEAD/small-business-innovation-research-sbir-department-of-homeland-security

https://seedfund.nsf.gov/awardees/history/details/?company=academic-web-pages-inc

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE

https://academicwebpages.com/

COVER STORY

Nonprofit Security Grant Program Best Practices: How to Avoid Common Pitfalls and Strengthen Your Proposal

Meghan Jacobsen, Grants Development Associate

The Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) is a highly sought-after funding opportunity for nonprofits that lack the security resources needed to protect their people and property from domestic or foreign terrorist threats. As someone who works closely with nonprofit organizations, NSGP season is the busiest time of year for me, and 2025 was no exception. After reviewing and editing countless NSGP applications, I have identified several mistakes I often see nonprofits make. This guide outlines best practices that will allow your organization to avoid the most common pitfalls when drafting your application.

BEST PRACTICE #1: START EARLY

While the NSGP application process is straightforward, it can be time-consuming. Completing a vulnerability assessment and obtaining vendor quotes often requires significant lead time. Applicants should also allow ample time to gather relevant statistics that demonstrate heightened risk and to craft a clear, well-reasoned proposal. Starting early increases the likelihood of submitting a competitive, thoughtful, and well-supported application.

If you are beginning this process at the beginning of the application cycle opening, you may find gathering all the necessary components to be not feasible. Give yourself plenty of time, well before the window opens, to reduce the chance of not being able to submit at all.

Watch our recent Grantscast, [Sustaining Your Mission: Grants Designed for Nonprofits.](#)

BEST PRACTICE #2: READ THE APPLICATION GUIDANCE

This is a point we emphasize often because it truly cannot be overstated: carefully reading the application guidance before preparing or submitting any grant is essential. The guidance outlines what is required, how and where to submit materials, what expenses are eligible, and post-award management expectations. Failing to review these instructions can lead to mistakes that may result in a denied application.

For NSGP, reviewing the guidance is especially important because requirements vary by state. Some states require a pre-approval process, others mandate that applications be submitted through a state portal, while others accept submissions by email. States often specify file naming conventions, and most require the Investment Justification form to be submitted in a fillable format. Following these instructions is vital to a successful application and is clearly outlined in the state-issued application guidance.

BEST PRACTICE #3: ANSWER EACH QUESTION DIRECTLY AND STAY ON-TOPIC

When reviewing applications, I often see information placed in sections where it does not belong. In many cases, the content itself is strong but would be far more effective in a different section, and adds little value to the question being asked. At times, a direct answer to the question is missing altogether. When writing an application, it is essential to respond clearly and directly to each question and avoid including irrelevant or off-topic information. For example, a section that asks for your organization's mission should focus solely on the mission—not on the reasons you are seeking funding, which is better suited under the "Threat" or "Vulnerability" sections.

To avoid this common mistake, reread each question and evaluate whether your response directly addresses what is being asked. If it does not, revise accordingly.

BEST PRACTICE #4: FOCUS ON TERRORIST THREATS, NOT CRIME

A common mistake I see organizations make is forgetting that NSGP is an anti-terrorism grant. While it is appropriate to reference past criminal activity when describing threats, the program is specifically intended to fund organizations at heightened risk of terrorist attacks. Even if your organization has never experienced a direct terrorist threat, you should still use data and statistics that demonstrate risks to similar organizations. For example, a synagogue might cite national data showing an increase in antisemitic threats and violence to illustrate its elevated risk profile and the need for security funding.

BEST PRACTICE #5: ALIGN PART IV (FACILITY HARDENING) RESPONSES DIRECTLY WITH YOUR BUDGET AND VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

Part IV of the Investment Justification is often the most challenging section of the application for many organizations. Think of **Part A** as your budget justification—your budget expressed in words rather than numbers. This section should clearly describe and justify every cost included in your budget, explaining why each item is necessary and how it addresses the vulnerabilities identified in your vulnerability assessment. Write in clear, straightforward language so reviewers can easily understand how each proposed investment contributes to protecting your facility and the people you serve.

Part B is the numerical portion of your budget and is just as critical. Every line item must directly align with both the budget justification in Part A and the findings of the vulnerability assessment. Use the drop-down menu to select the appropriate Allowable Equipment List (AEL) numbers, and group all purchases within the same category on a single line. For example, if you are purchasing thirty cameras, they should be listed as one line item under one AEL number, with the total cost reflecting all units. This is where vendor quotes are essential to ensure accuracy.

BEST PRACTICE #6: HAVE A SECOND SET OF EYES REVIEW BEFORE SUBMITTING

Before submitting your proposal, it is always recommended to have someone else review it. This goes beyond catching grammar or spelling errors—it helps ensure the proposal is clear and logical to someone unfamiliar with the project. If a section is confusing to a fresh reader, it will be confusing to a reviewer as well. An outside perspective allows you to identify gaps, clarify key points, and make refinements that strengthen the competitiveness of your proposal.

Careful planning, clear responses, and attention to detail are key to a strong NSGP application. By following best practices, you can submit a well-prepared proposal that effectively communicates your organization's risk and funding needs.

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.

National Priority Areas (NPAs) for 2025:

- Enhancing the protection of soft targets/crowded places.
- Supporting Homeland Security Task Forces and Fusion Centers
- Enhancing Cybersecurity
- Enhancing Election Security
- Supporting Border Crisis Response and Enforcement

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://communities.grantsoffice.com/s/grant/a0B3300000KeYKKEA3/nonprofit-security-grant-program-nsgp

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

Are you ready to pursue federal funding to enhance your nonprofit's physical and cybersecurity? Register for our Grantscast: Winning the Nonprofit Security Grant Program: Strategies to Strengthen Your Application

Canada Budget 2025, Innovation Funding in Transition (FY2025–26)

Sid Aubeeluck, Grants Development Associate (Canada)

Released on November 4 after a delayed tabling, Budget 2025 reflects the new Liberal government's effort to set the direction for the next phase of federal investment. The budget pairs higher overall spending with a reorientation of public funding priorities, signalling a shift in how government intends to deploy capital across the economy.

Notably, the budget marks a turning point in Canada's approach to innovation funding, reorganizing existing programs to prioritize resilience, productivity, and global competitiveness rather than simply layering on new initiatives.

LEGACY PROGRAMS IN TRANSITION

To meet up to 15% in savings targets over three years, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) is restructuring its programming to reduce duplication and sunset initiatives that have achieved their impact or are no longer aligned with evolving needs. This allows funds to be redirected toward future-focused, high-impact programs.

In the near term, major innovation vehicles remain funded:

- The Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) grows by roughly $400 million (about an14% increase) in its FY2025 Main Estimates, reinforcing its role in supporting large-scale business innovation, industrial research, and commercialization.

- The Global Innovation Clusters receive a meaningful boost of about $165 million (about an 81% increase) in its FY2025 Main Estimates, sustaining R&D collaboration and commercialization activity.

However, looking ahead, Budget 2025 signals a purposeful transition. Certain SIF streams (such as the Net Zero Accelerator) and Global Innovation Cluster envelopes are reaching the end of their lifecycle or experiencing declining demand. ISED is

deliberately reprioritizing its science and industry programming to align with core objectives and reduce overlap with other federal, provincial, and territorial investments. Over time, these legacy funding programs are expected to become less central, as future-focused initiatives take priority.

STRATEGIC RESPONSE FUND: THE NEXT ERA OF INDUSTRY SUPPORT

That shift sets the stage for the new $5 billion Strategic Response Fund (SRF), a flexible, forward-looking program designed to help Canadian companies adapt to global market pressures, strengthen supply chains, safeguard jobs, and drive innovation in key sectors.

The SRF builds on the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) by consolidating SIF's remaining mandates and capabilities into a single program focused on high-impact, large-scale projects in areas such as:

- Steel and industrial transformation

- Automotive and advanced manufacturing

- Forest products

- AI and digital transformation

An immediate $1 billion investment, delivered through SIF, will support the steel industry's transition toward new lines of business and more resilient domestic supply chains. This approach demonstrates how the SRF extends SIF's innovation focus, while rationalizing overlapping programs into a unified industrial support framework that prioritizes both competitiveness and technological advancement.

INVESTING IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY AND AI INFRASTRUCTURE

Budget 2025 also makes significant bets on Canada's digital future, notably $925.6 million over five years for sovereign Canadian AI compute infrastructure, aimed at boosting access to compute capacity for both public and private research and innovation. Of this total, $800 million comes from previously allocated government funding, illustrating the reallocation toward strategic digital priorities.

Complementing this, the budget signals the government's intention to enable the Canada Infrastructure Bank to invest in AI infrastructure projects using loans and other instruments, leveraging private capital to accelerate deployment.

MAKING IT CHEAPER AND EASIER TO INNOVATE

Alongside direct spending, Budget 2025 strengthens tax incentives to catalyze private investment:

- A new Productivity Super-Deduction allows businesses to write off a broad range of capital investments: from technological equipment to clean-energy assets, reducing after-tax costs.

- The SR&ED (Scientific Research and Experimental Development) program is slated for expansion and modernization, with higher thresholds and broader eligibility that make R&D tax incentives more accessible and effective.

These tax reforms aim to complement federal spending programs by lowering the cost of investment, encouraging firms of all sizes to innovate and scale within Canada.

INVESTING IN TALENT AND RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE

Budget 2025 also strengthens Canada's higher education and research system, recognizing that innovation depends on both talent and modern facilities. The government proposes $1 billion over 13 years through Canada's main federal research councils: the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), to create an Accelerated Research Chairs Initiative, bringing top international researchers to Canadian universities. In addition, $400 million over seven years will go toward upgrading labs, equipment, and other research infrastructure through the Canada Foundation for Innovation, ensuring these researchers have the tools they need for cutting-edge work. Together, these investments link world-class talent and facilities to industrial projects, and commercialization, helping federal innovation funding turn ideas into real economic impact.

LOOKING AHEAD: THE FUTURE OF CANADA'S INNOVATION FUNDING

Despite the focus on fiscal restraint and departmental savings, Budget 2025 does not signal a withdrawal from innovation as a national priority. Instead, it points to a reworking of how innovation is funded, moving away from perpetually extending legacy programs and toward a more strategic, competitive, and globally responsive funding model. Many industry and tech leaders have welcomed this shift, arguing that Canada is finally treating innovation infrastructure, particularly AI compute, as a core economic asset rather than a niche research concern. At the same time, others have cautioned that ambition alone is not enough. In artificial intelligence, for example, while new investments in sovereign compute capacity are broadly seen as necessary and overdue, critics point to ongoing bottlenecks in access, long wait times, and eligibility constraints that risk favouring larger incumbents over smaller firms. The debate emerging in the innovation community is less about whether Canada is investing and more about how quickly, how equitably, and how effectively these new funding tools translate into real adoption and competitive advantage. The result is a more complex picture: innovation funding is not shrinking, but shifting, and its success will depend on how effectively new investments translate into usable capacity on the ground.

SRF vs. SIF: Understanding Canada's New Approach to Large-Scale Innovation Funding

With Budget 2025, Canada is introducing the Strategic Response Fund (SRF), a natural evolution of the well-known Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF). While both funds target large-scale business innovation, understanding the differences is crucial to avoid confusion about their roles and priorities.

What They Have in Common

Both SIF and SRF aim to support transformational projects that boost competitiveness, create jobs, and attract investment. They typically target projects with total costs in the tens of millions, and they engage not just private firms but collaborative networks, including research institutions and non-profits. Both are vehicles for large-scale industrial innovation, helping Canadian companies expand, commercialize research, and participate more effectively in global markets.

The Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF)

SIF has long been Canada's flagship industrial innovation program. Its focus has been on long-term competitiveness across key sectors like advanced manufacturing, clean technology, aerospace, and digital industries. Funding streams under SIF supported R&D, commercialization, and ecosystem-building, with tailored programs for collaborations between businesses and research institutions. SIF was broad in scope, emphasizing both immediate growth and the development of sustainable innovation ecosystems.

The Strategic Response Fund (SRF)

SRF builds on SIF's foundation but introduces a stronger focus on resilience and responsiveness. Beyond supporting R&D and commercialization, SRF explicitly targets projects that help Canadian industries adapt to global market disruptions, strengthen supply chains, and pivot toward new products or lines of business. For example, SRF includes an immediate $1 billion investment to help the steel industry modernize operations and protect domestic capacity. Unlike SIF, SRF is designed to support pre-development work and demonstration projects, giving companies more flexibility in early-stage innovation and risk mitigation.

Key Takeaways

The transition from SIF to SRF is a strategic evolution, not a cancellation of past initiatives. Current SIF projects continue, but SRF now acts as the primary funding vehicle for large-scale industrial innovation. This shift signals a more targeted and globally responsive approach, ensuring Canadian innovation dollars are aligned with both current economic realities and future opportunities.

https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/article-ai-compute-access-fund-wait-time/

https://betakit.com/canada-budget-2025-ai-defence-open-banking/

https://chamber.ca/news/budget-2025-insights-from-our-policy-experts/

https://budget.canada.ca/2025/report-rapport/pdf/budget-2025.pdf

Securing 2026: Grant Funding for the FIFA World Cup and America 250

Shannon Day, Senior Grants Development Consultant

In 2018, a united North American bid won the right to host the FIFA World Cup; this year, that vision becomes reality. With 48 countries represented and millions of fans arriving to cheer on their teams, host cities are focused on the critical task of managing massive crowds and protecting vital infrastructure.

The eleven host cities in the United States have been planning for this event for years through established Host City Task Forces, and an influx of funding from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will be a welcome addition to strapped budgets.

The FIFA World Cup Grant Program (FWCGP) will distribute $625 million to these 11 host city task forces through 9 state agencies (California, Florida, Georgia, Massachusetts, Missouri [on behalf of Missouri and Kansas], New Jersey [on behalf of New York and New Jersey], Pennsylvania, Texas, and Washington). States applied for their funding by December 5th and will know how much funding they will receive by January 30th.

The Host City Committee Task Force in each of the 11 host cities will then make subawards to local units of government for planning, organization, equipment, training, and exercises. Each city will face unique challenges, so FWCGP funding will be relatively flexible to help address those needs. Many states and

host cities are recruiting help from first responder agencies across the state, so this event truly is an "all hands on deck" moment.

In addition to the FWCGP, the Counter-Unmanned Aircraft Systems (C-UAS) Grant Program makes $250 million available to these same host states/cities, and to the National Capital Region for America 250 events in 2026. Uncrewed/unmanned aerial systems/vehicles, commonly known as drones, have become increasingly ubiquitous in our skies. While many are used for good, from delivering food to war-ravaged countries to hobbyists and professional photographers taking previously impossible photos to news organizations taking videos of massive crowds at events, they can also be used with nefarious aims, from spying on neighbors to war aggression.

An additional $250 million will be available in 2027, with eligibility expanded to all US states and territories as a pass-through grant. C-UAS is a first-of-its-kind funding opportunity to help federal and state governments keep up with national security threats.

> **A pass-through grant is funding passed from one recipient down to a smaller organization. For example, federal funding may be passed to local organizations through a state agency.**

Ultimately, the success of these historic events depends on coordination, collaboration, and communion between federal and local agencies. By addressing logistical hurdles and emerging technological threats, these grant programs will help ensure that host cities are prepared and resilient, and that the focus remains on the spirit of athletic competition and celebration.

"Delivery Drone," Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 18 Dec. 2025. Accessed 23 Dec. 2025.

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Solomon, Christopher. "Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, December 13, 2025." Institute for the Study of War, 15 Dec. 2025, Accessed 23 Dec. 2025.

Staff, WJAR. "Sex Offender Allegedly Used Drone to Spy on Neighbor." Https://Www.Wdbj7.Com, 27 June 2023, Accessed 23 Dec. 2025.

Venturi, Gabriele. "Gallery 2025: Drone Photo Awards." Siena Awards | The World of Imagination, Accessed 23 Dec. 2025.

Counter-Unmanned Aircraft Systems (C-UAS) Grant Program

SUMMARY

Provides funding to enhance state and local capabilities to detect, identify, track, or monitor unmanned aircraft systems. This funding supports U.S. state, local, tribal, and territorial governments in combatting the unlawful use of unmanned aircraft systems that pose a threat to the safety and security of the American people, communities, and institutions.

Funding is available in the following categories:

- Planning
- Organization
- Equipment
- Training and travel
- Exercises
- Management and administration

Using C-UAS Grant Program funds, eligible governments and their subrecipients may purchase unmanned aircraft system (UAS) detection, identification, monitoring, tracking, and mitigation (DIMT-M) technologies to support public safety officials in the protection of the public and critical infrastructure from nefarious or unlawful use of UAS; mitigation technologies will be limited to select jurisdictions.

FUNDING

$500 million is available in total funding over two years. In 2026, $250 million will be distributed to 11 FIFA World Cup host states and the National Capital Region. In 2027, $250 million will be distributed to all states and territories. States will receive statutory minimum allocations as defined under the SHSP.

ELIGIBILITY

In 2026, eligible applicants are the 11 states that are directly or indirectly hosting FIFA World Cup 2026 events and the National Capital Region (NCR), which is hosting national America 250 events. These states include Texas, Florida, National Capital Region, New York, New Jersey, California, Georgia, Missouri, Kansas, Massachusetts, Washington, and Pennsylvania. Host states may issue subawards to eligible local, tribal, and territorial government entities, including city and county agencies, law enforcement, fire services, emergency medical services, emergency management, and other qualifying public safety organizations.

DEADLINE

SAAs applied by December 5, 2025. Local deadlines will vary.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://communities.grantsoffice.com/s/grant/a0BQk000005J9cbMAC/counterunmanned-aircraft-systems-cuas-grant-program

https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/counter-unmanned-aircraft-systems-grant-program

Program Snapshot

FIFA World Cup Grant Program (FWCGP)

SUMMARY

Provides funding to enhance security and preparedness for the 2026 FIFA World Cup events in the United States.

Funding is available in the following POETE categories:

- Planning
- Organization
- Equipment
- Training
- Exercises

All projects funded under the FWCGP must demonstrate a clear connection to building capabilities that safeguard FIFA World Cup events.

FUNDING

Approximately $625 million is available in total funding for nine awards, ranging from $32 to $74 million. Cost share/match is not required.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants are the nine host states: California, Florida, Georgia, Massachusetts, Missouri [on behalf of Missouri and Kansas], New Jersey [on behalf of New York and New Jersey], Pennsylvania, Texas, and Washington, with a mandatory pass-through to the Host City Committee Task Forces within 45 days of receipt of funds by the SAA.

DEADLINE

SAAs applied by December 5, 2025. Local deadlines will vary.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://communities.grantsoffice.com/s/grant/a0BQk000005JAK9MAO/fifa-world-cup-grant-program-fwcgp

https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/fifa-world-cup-grant-program#:~:text=Fiscal%20Year%202026,Last%20updated%20October%2028%2C%202025

Quick Tip: Leverage Letters of Support to Strengthen Your Grant Applications

Sandy Trowbridge, Grants Development Associate

What is one effective way to set your proposals apart in a competitive funding landscape? Strategically leverage letters of support within your grant application submissions.

WHAT ARE LETTERS OF SUPPORT?

Letters of support are formal documents wherein an individual or organization with direct knowledge of your work endorses your proposed project. Always refer to the grant program's application guidance to confirm whether letters of support are required, encouraged, or permitted. If yes, be sure to approach them as a key component of your application package.

WHY ARE LETTERS OF SUPPORT IMPORTANT?

Letters of support build funder confidence by providing third-party validation of both the community need for your proposed project and your organization's capacity to implement it successfully. When respected external partners affirm that the project is urgently needed and that your organization is well-positioned to deliver it, your credibility with the funder is strengthened. Unlike reference letters, which focus on past performance, letters of support explicitly endorse your proposed project and validate your ability to carry out the work. They provide an opportunity for trusted stakeholders to highlight your organizational capacity, confirm project relevance, and demonstrate broader community buy-in—ultimately increasing the competitiveness of your application.

WHO TO REQUEST LETTERS OF SUPPORT FROM?

Letters of support are most impactful when written by individuals or organizations that you have worked closely with before, and that can speak to specific examples of your organization's impact and the need for the proposed project in the broader community. Consider requesting letters of support from:

- Community Leaders (e.g., local elected officials, school superintendents, police chiefs, or other civic leaders as appropriate) who can validate community need for the proposed project and your organization's role in addressing local community challenges to date.

- Industry Experts (e.g., researchers or field professionals) who can affirm the quality, credibility, and relevance of your approach.

- Partner Organizations (e.g., nonprofits, government agencies, or collaborators) who can speak to your capacity, reliability, and alignment with broader community efforts.

- Program Beneficiaries (e.g., individuals that your programming has served in the past) who can provide compelling testimonials demonstrating real-world impact and the importance of continued support.

Avoid requesting letters of support from individuals or organizations with no real connection to your work, as vague endorsements add no meaningful value to an application.

WHEN TO REQUEST LETTERS OF SUPPORT?

Request letters of support as early as possible. Ideally, make requests at least six weeks before the grant deadline and set an internal deadline for writers that is at least two weeks prior to submission. This buffer allows time for follow-up, revisions, or delays. Follow up two weeks before the internal deadline to check on status and offer clarification or additional supporting materials as needed.

HOW TO REQUEST LETTERS OF SUPPORT?

When reaching out to potential supporters, begin with a phone call or meeting whenever possible. Highlight why you thought of them and how their support will strengthen your grant application. Follow up with a formal email with more information once they confirm their willingness to write a letter. While you may offer to draft a letter of support, be sure to avoid reused or generic language, as this can undermine credibility. Instead, consider providing a template along with tailored bullet points that allow each supporter to uniquely highlight their perspectives. Providing this detail upfront will reduce potential frustration and help supporters write strong, meaningful letters. Be sure to provide:

- An optional letter of support template,
- Your organization's mission and relevant data on its impact,
- Information on the specific grant you are applying to (including funder goals/priorities),
- A brief outline of the project you are proposing in your grant application,
- Key points you would like to highlight in the letter,
- Submission instructions, and
- A clear deadline.

WHAT TO DO AFTER LETTERS OF SUPPORT ARE RECEIVED?

Once a completed letter is received, send a personal thank-you message acknowledging the supporter's time and contribution. Keep supporters informed of the grant outcome and project progress. Continue strengthening these relationships through the provision of regular updates, sharing relevant reports, and passing along invitations to program events. Consistent, meaningful engagement builds trust, encourages future support, and cultivates a strong network of long-term partners. Ultimately, effective letters of support are rooted in authentic relationships, making early and ongoing relationship-building essential.

CORE LETTER OF SUPPORT COMPONENTS:

- **Introduction:** Clearly identify yourself, your role, your organization, the length and nature of your relationship with the applicant, and the specific grant and project you are endorsing.
- **Authority:** Explain why you are well-positioned to provide this endorsement and how your relationship with the organization gives you insight into their work.
- **Statement of Support:** Provide a clear, enthusiastic endorsement of the organization and the specific proposed project.
- **Alignment:** Describe how the project aligns with the grant's objectives, advances the funder's priorities, and addresses broader community needs.
- **Evidence:** Share specific, concrete examples from your personal experience with the organization that demonstrate the organization's impact, effectiveness, and capacity for success.
- **Closing:** Reaffirm your support, emphasize the applicant's qualifications, and indicate your willingness to provide additional information if needed.
- **Signature:** Include your name, title, organization, and full contact information.
- **Format:** Use a standard business letter format on official organization letterhead, limit the letter to one page (no more than two max), use clear and specific language, avoid unnecessary jargon, and review carefully before submission.

Technology 101: (Part 3) Guidance for the Health System Grant Writer

Amber Walker, Grants Development Associate (Healthcare)

For many grant writers, there is a deep drive and sense of fulfillment that comes from crafting a proposal that could lead to real change. This is especially true for the healthcare grant writer. Sometimes that change is improving access to services, advancing technology, or addressing health disparities. Grant writing can be equally as challenging as it is rewarding. Proposals can be quite complex, and the process can be eye-opening as the real needs of your community. Extreme gaps in care and inequitable resources are exposed through your research and proposal preparation.

One thing that will continue to keep healthcare grant writers on their toes is that funding opportunities for the integration of technology into public health are constantly evolving. Writers need to adapt to an ever-changing landscape. Passive observers of technological advances will not have a competitive edge. Grant writers across the healthcare landscape should stay up to date on trends and connect with their network to better prepare their proposal for work.

In this article, we will elaborate on some commonly used technologies in healthcare and in hospital settings. It is intended to help the average grant writer understand the integration of technology into grant fundable projects. In Part 1, we shared a high-level overview of Telehealth for both end users and providers, and clinical decision support vs. AI. In Part 2, we will dive a bit deeper and review case examples of how these technologies may present themselves in grant-funded projects.

Receiving a grant can be a transformative moment for a program or department. Grants enable providers to harness technology in meaningful ways, like improving both patient and clinician experiences by streamlining processes and creating opportunities to advance health equity by removing bias from decision-making. Additionally, funding allows hospitals and clinics to modernize their equipment to support and expand virtual care, meeting the growing demand for remote services by using grant funding.

PUTTING FUNDING INTO ACTION

One recipient of the **Rural Maternity and Obstetrics Management Strategies Program**, administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration, utilized their award for telehealth solutions. Through the program, this South Dakota hospital planned to leverage telehealth solutions and data-informed decision-making to improve the quality of care for expecting parents through a cost-neutral or savings-sustainable model.

PROJECT ABSTRACT

Facility type: Hospital

Title: Leveraging data, partnerships, and integrated perinatal care to improve health equity among birthing people in South Dakota

Project goal: Applicant will leverage telehealth solutions and data-informed decision-making to create a care pathway that improves the quality of care for expecting patients to deliver healthy babies through a cost-neutral or cost-saving and sustainable model.

Funds requested: $1million annually/ 4 years

Network composition: The project will establish a network of partners, including regional rural facilities Federally Qualified Health Centers (fqhc), the State Department of Health (Home Visiting Program), and the State Department of Social Services (state Medicaid agency), as well as two rural facilities with low delivery volumes.

Service area: The primary target service area includes rural counties.

Target population: Pregnant patients in rural areas over the age of eighteen who have significant barriers to obstetrics services and access care at a local facility.

Project activity: Program interventions include: remote patient monitoring, telehealth for rural patients and delivery centers, care coordination and service aggregation, statewide wraparound services, and a social determinant of health screening program.

Expected outcomes include increasing access to obstetrics services, improving related clinical outcomes, and facilitating the development of a robust data and evaluation program that helps partners better understand and address O.B. needs in the region.

Increasingly, grant funders are awarding programs that focus on how AI can improve healthcare delivery. In a recent announcement made by the **American Nurses Foundation** regarding their "**Reimagining Nursing Initiative Grant Recipients**," two-thirds of awardees integrated the use of AI into their project design. The Nurse Assist – AI project is an artificial intelligence system that supports home healthcare nurses. The project was designed to utilize video, audio, and electronic health record data to reduce the documentation burden. By reducing burden, nurses become empowered to make informed decisions regarding delivery and recommendations at the point of care.

Another technology that providers are using is Clinical Decision Support (CDS). It is of particular interest to grant funders due to its potential to advance the delivery of care. The "**Using Innovative Digital Healthcare Solutions to Improve Quality at the Point of Care**" grant program, administered by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Agency for Health Care Research and Quality, is a program that tests promising digital healthcare interventions used at the point of care. A recent awardee of this grant, The University of Rochester, has leveraged the program to include clinical decision support.

PROJECT ABSTRACT

Project Narrative: Many laboratory tests are unnecessary and contribute to reduced care quality. Using multisite data from the PICU Data Collaborative (PDC), we will develop machine learning models that forecast future laboratory values in children with critical illness and identify processes to use these forecasts to reduce laboratory overutilization. We will use user-centered design principles to develop clinical decision support tool(s), deploy the tool(s) at a pilot site, and establish the groundwork for a future effectiveness-implementation trial

Grant writing remains a deeply rewarding profession; it offers the opportunity to drive meaningful changes in one's community through thoughtful storytelling. As the health care delivery landscape evolves, so must grant writers. By becoming familiar with and embracing new technologies and staying informed about emerging trends, grant writers in the healthcare sector will stay competitive in an increasingly competitive landscape. From AI-powered diagnostic tools to telemedicine platforms funded by grants, technology continues to revolutionize patient care and outcomes. By mastering the craft of persuasive writing and the tools that define modern innovation, grant writers can play a vital role in shaping the future of health care and beyond.

Read Parts 1 & 2 of our Healthcare Funding Series here:

An Analysis of the Hospital Preparedness Program

Technology and the Rural Health Transformation Program

Finding and Winning Organizational Capacity Grants

Marc Smithers, Grants Development Associate

In the November 2025 issue of FUNDED, the importance of building organizational capacity to expand grantseeking efforts was introduced. Organizational capacity encompasses the resources (human, financial, and structural) and capabilities of the organization to manage those resources that ultimately enable the institution to achieve "the next level of operational, programmatic, financial, or organizational maturity, so it may more effectively and efficiently advance its mission into the future." The need for organizational capacity is apparent, both to institutional leaders who want to continue to grow their program's reach and effectiveness and to outside funders who want to ensure that their dollars will achieve their desired outcomes. Grants are an often-overlooked opportunity that organizations seeking to grow their capacity should consider. In part two of our focus on organizational capacity, we will explore three types of organizational capacity-building funding opportunities with examples of each and leave you with actionable steps to make your next application more competitive for these programs.

THREE AVENUES TO FUND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Type 1: Specific Opportunities

The first type of organizational capacity grant opportunity is those programs that are specifically designed to build an institution's capacity. These opportunities come from funders who are intentionally seeking ways to support organizational growth and efficiency. Depending on the parameters of the funding opportunity, organizations can generally use funds from these programs to undergo strategic planning or restructuring, auditing their financial systems, building evaluation mechanisms to improve performance, development opportunities for leadership and board members, as well as upgrading backend technology systems that serve key institutional functions. One of the grant programs offered by the Campbell Foundation provides capacity-building funds to nonprofit organizations focused on ecological protection, particularly in underserved communities. Funds can be used for equity and inclusion training efforts, technology assessments and upgrades, and financial audit services.

Increasing Competitiveness for Specific Opportunities: When seeking funds from specific opportunities for capacity building, it is important to remember that funders want to see how these funds will better position your organization for growth and increased effectiveness. Be sure to emphasize how these capacity-building funds will better direct your organizational trajectory rather than focusing too much on your current organizational needs. Present a clear picture for the funder of where your organization is going and how this funding will unlock the capabilities to get to that destination.

Type 2: Adjacent Opportunities

The second type of capacity building opportunities can be considered adjacent opportunities, or programs that will fund or partially fund capacity building that ultimately enables the institution to be better positioned to achieve funder-specific outcomes. Adjacent opportunities can be harder to find because they do not have organizational capacity building as a main or stated goal, but rather see organizational capacity as a prerequisite step for institutions that submit competitive applications. These programs often have a subsection of their funds allocated for planning grants; however, these funds can typically be used by the institution to increase its competitiveness in subsequent funding cycles. This helps the funder diversify the spectrum of institutions they award funds to over time, broadening their reach to underserved communities and populations, and not simply awarding funds year over year to the same handful of already qualified applicants. The National Science Foundation offers several programs that have Planning Grant tracks, which institutions can apply for, such as the [Accelerating Research Translation (ART) Program](). The Accelerating Technology Transfer track in the ART Program is specifically designed to build an institution's capacity for innovation translation in a variety of different science and technology fields, ultimately helping the institution be positioned to seek funding in other funding tracks in future cycles of the program. Funding from this track, then, can be considered an adjacent opportunity because the ultimate goal of the ART Program is to translate academic research discoveries into tangible solutions from which the public can benefit. This initial track, though, is focused on increasing an institution's capacity to expand its ability to then apply for larger funds with increased research translation potential.

Increasing Competitiveness for Adjacent Opportunities: Capacity-building funds from adjacent opportunities always need to be framed as investments that are helping your institution better meet the main priorities of the parent program from which they are derived. They may be helping your institution meet internal needs, such as providing critical technology upgrades or providing professional development opportunities. These needs are not the funders' needs, however, and meeting their aims is the most important piece in crafting a competitive application. Clearly articulate how your organizational capacity ultimately helps them achieve their organizational goals.

Type 3: Broad Opportunities

The final type of grant opportunity that can be used for organizational capacity building is broad opportunities, which are programs that provide funds for general purposes that are meant to strengthen the institution in multiple ways. These kinds of opportunities typically allow institutions to use funds for a variety of projects, including administrative improvements, support infrastructure, and even some that can be used for grant management and compliance. The Department of Education offers the [Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP)]() biennially in which awarded institutions can fund multiple kinds of capacity building projects such as technology improvements, administrative management systems, and fundraising capabilities. While broad opportunities can provide ample avenues for institutional capacity building, these kinds of programs often have strict eligibility requirements and may not be an option for a majority of grantseeking organizations.

Increasing Competitiveness for Broad Opportunities: Keep in mind that just because a program can fund a particular project does not mean that the project is a high priority for the funder. Do not confuse being eligible for a program with being competitive for a program. Broad opportunities often exist to ensure that an institution that serves a particular population or performs a particular service, such as rural populations, diverse communities, or vulnerable regions, can continue to perform at a high level. Align your capacity building efforts to the ultimate mission of your institution and the stated priorities of the funding agency.

CONCLUSION

Capacity building should be a goal of all organizational leaders, but the time, energy, and money required for these initiatives often deter investment in these areas. Capacity building grants can alleviate some of these concerns, providing dedicated resources for institutions to meaningfully develop and expand their organizational capacity. These grant opportunities can serve as strategic avenues to diversify organizational funding streams and grow the overall impact of an organization's mission. Finding the right opportunity, aligning your project with a funder's priorities, and emphasizing organizational growth rather than organizational need are all key steps toward making your next application for a capacity-building grant stand out.

Program Snapshot

Title III: Strengthening Institutions Programs

SUMMARY

The Strengthening Institutions Program provides funding to support institutions of higher education that enroll high numbers of students who receive federal need-based assistance. The SIP opportunity supports these institutions in becoming more financially self-sufficient, expanding their capacity to serve low-income students, and improving institutional management, fiscal stability, and academic quality.

Funds can be used for a variety of purposes, including:

- Purchasing scientific or laboratory equipment, computer technology, and distance learning equipment;

- Faculty development, including the development and improvement of academic programs; and

- Establishing or improving an institutional development office, endowment fund, or general fund management systems.

ELIGIBILITY

Institutions of higher education must have at least 50 percent of their degree students receiving need-based assistance under Title IV of the Higher Education Act, or have a substantial number of enrolled students receiving Pell Grants and have low educational and general expenditures. Institutions can verify their eligibility at the program website: https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/grants-higher-education/eligibility-designations-higher-education-programs

DEADLINE

Spring 2026 (projected).

FOR MORE INFORMATION

https://communities.grantsoffice.com/s/grant/a0B3300000MMQjTEAX/title-iii-strengthening-institutions-program-sip-parts-a-and-f

https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/grants-higher-education/improvement-of-postsecondary-education/title-iii-part-programs-strengthening-institutions#home

K-12 Safety Trends for 2026

Sam Rawdon, Grants Development Associate (Education)

As K-12 schools move into 2026, student safety has evolved far beyond locked doors and campus patrols. Schools are navigating an increasingly complex risk environment that includes cyber threats, access-management challenges, mental health concerns, and rising expectations for rapid emergency response. At the same time, tight budgets and uncertain public funding make it harder for districts and schools to invest in the systems they need. Grants are becoming a critical resource for bridging that gap and advancing modern safety initiatives.

1. FROM ISOLATED TOOLS TO UNIFIED SAFETY SYSTEMS

Schools are moving away from fragmented security tools and toward comprehensive platforms that integrate surveillance, access control, alerts, and analytics into a single operational view. Instead of managing multiple systems independently, K-12 safety teams are adopting centralized solutions that improve coordination, increase situational awareness, and streamline response.

Outdated infrastructure not only reduces security but also raises maintenance costs and limits growth. Grant funding often supports modernization efforts, helping schools upgrade legacy equipment and implement integrated systems that would otherwise exceed available budgets. Many grant programs focused on school safety and infrastructure prioritize projects that enhance system connectivity and response capability.

2. SMARTER SAFETY THROUGH AI AND DATA

Artificial intelligence and data-driven tools are transforming how schools identify and prevent incidents. Modern systems can detect unusual behavior, flag safety risks, and alert staff in real time. Predictive analytics help administrators anticipate high-risk areas and allocate resources more effectively.

While advanced technology can be costly, grants reduce financial barriers and accelerate adoption, especially for schools with limited internal funding. Public and private funding increasingly support projects that demonstrate measurable safety improvements, making AI-driven solutions strong candidates for grant support.

3. EMERGENCY READINESS TAKES CENTER STAGE

Preparedness is gaining renewed focus as schools plan for natural disasters, public health events, and security incidents. Emergency notification systems are being upgraded to support mass messaging via text, email, apps, and geofencing technology.

Funding opportunities related to school safety and disaster preparedness often include support for communications upgrades and coordination tools. Schools that link emergency management improvements to both safety and operational continuity strengthen their funding case and enhance long-term resilience.

4. WELLNESS AS A SAFETY PRIORITY

School safety increasingly includes mental health and behavioral support. Schools are investing in counseling services, threat assessment teams, and early-warning systems that allow staff to intervene before situations escalate.

Grant programs increasingly emphasize prevention, wellness, and student success. Schools that present mental health and counseling services as part of a broader safety strategy, rather than as stand-alone initiatives, are often more competitive in both public and private funding opportunities.

5. THE INTEGRATION OF DIGITAL AND PHYSICAL SECURITY

Cybersecurity is no longer separate from physical safety. Connected locks, cameras, and communications systems depend on secure digital infrastructure. A cyber breach can disrupt real-world safety operations, making cybersecurity an essential component of school protection.

Technology-focused grants and philanthropic funding are helping schools strengthen cyber defenses that directly support safety systems. School leaders who clearly demonstrate this connection are more likely to attract funding and community support.

GRANT FUNDING IN THE 2026 K-12 SAFETY STRATEGY

With budgets under pressure and safety expectations rising, grants have become central to school safety planning. Schools are most successful when they pursue funding aligned with long-term goals rather than reacting to individual opportunities.

Strong grant strategies typically include:

- Evidence-driven outcomes
- Partnerships with local agencies and community organizations
- Clear sustainability planning
- Measurable improvements

As federal and state funding fluctuates, foundation and corporate donors are filling critical gaps, particularly for innovation and modernization projects.

LOOKING FORWARD

Future-ready schools are those that embrace collaboration, technology, and prevention. By integrating physical security, digital systems, and student support services, schools can create safer and more resilient environments.

The districts and schools that lead in 2026 will be proactive, not reactive, and grant funding will remain a powerful tool for turning safety plans into reality.

The Freeze on Federal Research: The Trump Administration's $2 Billion NIH and NSF Reduction

Elizabeth Evans, Manager of Research & Consultation

Looking back, there was no greater influence on the 2025 federal grantmaking year than the Trump Administration's call for agencies to review current, pending, and future funding agreements to align with the administration's policy priorities. In response, several of the 26 federal grant-making departments halted the announcement of new grant awards while attempting to rescind funds slotted for existing awardees. Countless anecdotes about the disruption to grant funding have emerged from non-profit organizations, educational institutions, local government, and healthcare. One group appears to have borne the brunt: National Institutes of Health (NIH)- and National Science Foundation (NSF)-funded researchers.

WHAT DOES THE DATA SAY?

According to a recent article from The New York Times (NYT), approximately $2 billion in research funding was cut in 2025. Cuts included approximately $800 million from over 2,900 NSF grants and roughly $1.2 billion from over 3,500 NIH grants. Among the eliminated funding, the NYT found that "Administration Unaligned" research projects or initiatives were disproportionally represented. In all, the NIH made 22% fewer new grant awards in 2025, while the NSF made 25% fewer new awards (Bhatia et al., 2025).

The reduction in total research spending is not the only significant shift. Using publicly available data from USASpending, NIH RePORTER, and NSF Award Search, the NYT found that the NIH also shifted support to shorter project periods. Historically, NIH researchers have had up to two additional years to spend down funding after a five-year project period. Funding also came in one-year installments for that five-year project period. Now, the NIH is offering researchers four-year project periods with only one additional year to spend down remaining funds. The funding for all four years of the project period is also allocated in year one. This change is attributed to the White House's call for increased annual budget flexibility by fully funding research projects in the year the award decision is made. In effect, researchers now face greater competition for funds, receive fewer awards, and have less time to complete their research.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR OTHER GRANT SEEKERS?

If we use the NIH and NSF as bellwethers for further shifts in the federal grant-making space, government grant seekers should be on the lookout for five key changes:

1. Future awards contingent on alignment with the ideologies of the current political party in power. Several agencies received instructions to search for keywords – including Green Energy, Gender Identity, or Diversity – within submitted proposals and deny funding if present (Crocket, 2025).

2. Priority given to projects that can provide results which directly and quickly benefit American priorities. This move aligns with the Administration's "America First" ideology over the historical emphasis on investing in projects that hold value for global scientific or social progress (Holland & Knight, 2025).

3. Increased use of "Termination for Convenience" clauses within award agreement letters. These clauses allow an agency to cut funding to a recipient organization mid-project if they are found to be out of alignment with administration priorities, regardless of performance (Holland & Knight, 2025).

4. Increased scrutiny of indirect cost rates and greater limitations for such expenses. Applicants with lower indirect cost rates may be viewed more favorably when applications are scored (Reynolds, 2025).

5. Preference for funding smaller or newer organizations. The White House has expressed a desire to prevent "repeat players" from winning awards year after year, particularly universities and large nonprofits (White House, 2025).

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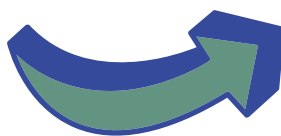
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