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THE SHIFTING BROADBAND FUNDING LANDSCAPE

*Collaboration Between K-12
and Higher Education*

Foundation Grants 101

*Grant Funding for Fire and
Emergency Medical Services*

*Two Year Institutions and the
National Science Foundation*

*“Is That How This Works?” ESSER Funds
Have Been Left Open to Interpretation*

*Pursuing Grant Funding for
Water and Energy Utilities*

PLUS! SUMMARY INFO ON 5 EXCITING
GRANT OPPORTUNITIES!

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ON THE COVER

In this issue we explore the current grant funding landscape for state and local government broadband and connectivity projects, and consider possible changes to expect over the coming years.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

DEAR READERS,

We cast a wide net this issue, with a little something for everyone – from fire and EMS to water authorities, from K-12 to higher education, and even broadband service providers of all configurations.

In the much-discussed topic of stimulus monies, Chris Barnes and Patrick Riedy take us through the state of broadband and K-12 stimulus funding, looking back at what has been funded and ahead at what we might expect in terms of uses and scale from current and forthcoming appropriations.

As we move on to the subject of collaboration in education, Liz Shay provides a primer on K-12 and higher education coordination more generally, and Christina Fernandez takes us through some of the ways 2-year institutions and community colleges can approach the (erstwhile intimidating) National Science Foundation, with a focus on boldness and – where appropriate – collaboration with other institutions as a strategy for building an attractive project.

In a more functionally-focused vein, Shannon Day provides some tips on accessing funds for fire and EMS, and Richard Campo covers often overlooked by essential water and energy utility funding.

And not to be outdone, Sydney Stapleton shares a few tips everyone can use to burnish their foundation grantseeking skills.

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

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

Sincerely,
Michael Paddock
Editor and Publisher,
FUNDED



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COLLABORATION BETWEEN K-12 AND HIGHER EDUCATION

By Liz Shay

K-12 and higher education institutions frequently work completely independently of one another, except for the occasional instances of dual enrollment agreements for high school students. Obviously, each of them knows their own students best and it's easy to get caught up in the day-to-day operations to make sure you're meeting educational goals. However, building collaborations between K-12 schools and institutes of higher education can provide new opportunities to reach your institutional goals.

WHY COLLABORATE?

Collaborating can provide many benefits for both K-12 and higher education institutions. Often, you have mutual or related goals that could be more easily accomplished together. You might even be able to reduce duplication of efforts. For example, we see this frequently with career and technical education, since both high schoolers and community/technical college students are interested in similar courses. You will also be able to share resources, leading to possible cost savings. When you're looking for grant funding to support your projects, having strong partnerships can also put you in the lead over similarly strong proposals without collaboration.

Perhaps the most important benefit of collaboration, though, is the ability to build a well-rounded project. K-12 schools and institutes of higher education each have their own areas of expertise that can be leveraged during planning efforts for project design and implementation. For example, a K-12 school might be interested in developing new innovative curriculum to teach their students about computer science. This school is an expert on their students, where they are in their intellectual development, and how to keep them engaged in the classroom. However, they may not have instructors qualified to plan the curriculum or the ability to effectively evaluate the success of the project. This is where collaborating with a local institute of higher education can be highly beneficial! The college has computer science teaching experts who can help with curriculum development and training the K-12 teachers to teach the courses. They also have researchers who can design and implement evaluation and iterative improvement plans. Bringing together this range of experts to form the project team will show any potential grant funders that you are well-prepared for success.

Supporting innovative K-12 education and teacher professional development can often best be accomplished through partnerships between K-12 schools or districts and institutes of higher education. Each organization brings their own expertise to the project planning and implementation.



IMPLEMENTING COLLABORATION

Clearly collaboration can be beneficial when you're developing new projects or submitting a project for a grant program. However, you don't want to just jump into collaboration for the sake of being able to say that you have partnerships with others. It's important to be purposeful in selecting who you will include as partners in your project. Consider what each member of the team might be able to contribute to the project and how they will be able to add something that otherwise could not be accomplished.

No one likes to be told what they must do without any agency. Make sure to loop in any potential project partners very early in the project planning process! You want them to be part of the team because they can contribute something unique to the project, so they need an opportunity to be able to share that expertise. Start with an introductory meeting including all the potential project partners. During this conversation, everyone can share what they have to offer to the project. You will also be able to define what each organization's role will be and determine what success will look like for the project. Once you have finalized these plans, write up letters of commitment or memoranda of understanding. These are documents that explicitly define what each partner will contribute to the project and act as a contract between organizations for the implementation of the project. These documents may then be included in any grant applications to demonstrate the commitment of each member of the collaboration and make the grant-funder more confident in the strength of the partnership.

GRANTS FOR COLLABORATION

There are many grants where collaboration between K-12 schools and institutes of higher education is either required or encouraged. These opportunities cover a wide range of projects from innovative STEM education to teacher professional development to preparing high school students for postsecondary education.

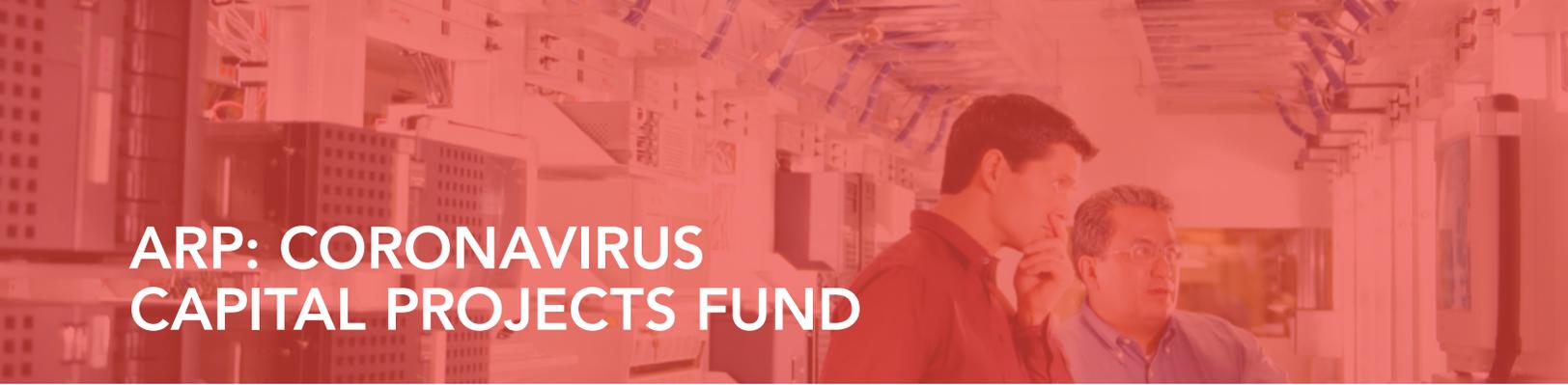
The Education Innovation and Research Program (EIR) from the U.S. Department of Education is interested in innovative projects to improve student achievement and attainment for high-need students. Of particular interest are field-initiated innovations, particularly in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and math) with a special emphasis on computer science. The grant funder is also interested in projects that prepare students to be informed, thoughtful, and productive individuals and citizens. Projects under this priority focus on student skills development in areas like positive personal relationship formation, perseverance, self-esteem, problem-solving skills, and self-regulation. Awards are up to \$4 million for up to 5 years, although early phase applicants are initially awarded for 3 years with a potential continuation to the full 5 years. A 10% cost match is required and funds can be cash or in-kind from federal, state, local, or private sources. Applications were due August 2021 and a similar deadline is anticipated each year (August 2022). Local Education Agencies (school districts and charter schools with LEA status) are eligible as lead applicants and have the option of including other project partners, such as institutes of higher education.

The U.S. Department of Education also has a program called Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) which is interested in increasing student achievement by improving the quality of new teachers and prospective teachers. Projects are typically focused on teacher professional development. For the 2020 funding cycle, all projects were required to implement multifaceted teacher residency programs, particularly for high-need subjects and areas. The next funding cycle may have a different focus area, but will still be interested in developing new teachers. Awards range from \$500,000 to \$1.5 million with an average award size of about \$750,000 for the first year and may be continued for subsequent years. At least 50% of the total project budget must be covered by the applicant using non-federal funds. Applications were due in June 2020 and a similar deadline is anticipated every other year (June 2022). A partnership between a high-need LEA and an institute of higher education with a teacher professional development program is required to be eligible to apply. Applicants also have the option of including other project partners.

A third program from the U.S. Department of Education is the Gaining Early Awareness & Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) Partnership grant. The goal of this program is to improve college access and completion for students who have been traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education. Projects should help students improve their academic performance in high school, increase the rate of graduation, and develop educational expectations for the students around postsecondary education. Awards range from \$100,000 to \$5 million for 6 to 7 years with an average award size of about \$1.2 million. Budget requests must not exceed \$800/student/year and a 1:1 match using non-federal funds is required. Applicants were due in June 2021 and a similar deadline is anticipated every other year (June 2023). A partnership between one or more LEAs and one or more institutes of higher education, plus at least two other community organizations or entities is required to be eligible to apply.

There are also many grants available for collaboration between K-12 and higher education outside of the U.S. Department of Education. For example, Computer Science for All (CS for All) from the National Science Foundation is interested in projects that teach K-12 students computer science and computational thinking skills. Applicants may choose a particular strand including: the high school strand for supporting teachers to teach rigorous computer science courses at that level; the preK-8 strand that develops instructional materials to integrate computer science and computational thinking into preK-8 classrooms; and the preK-12 or preK-14 pathways strand to design district-wide pathways for computer science and computational thinking at all levels. Awards range from up to \$300,000 for 2 years to up to \$2 million for 4 years, depending on the scope of the proposed project. Applications are next due in February 2022 and a similar deadline is anticipated each year. Many different types of organizations are eligible to apply, but the most competitive applicants are usually institutes of higher education in collaboration with K-12 schools or districts.

Whether a particular grant opportunity requires partnership between K-12 and higher education institutions or just provides that as an option, collaboration can open up new possibilities for education entities. Schools all bring their own areas of expertise and particular skills to project teams. Including these organizations through the project planning and implementation phases can make your projects that much stronger. But don't feel like you need to wait for a particular grant program to open or a curriculum development focus to come up to talk about collaborating. Starting to form relationships between K-12 schools and institutes of higher education or having regular brainstorming sessions with partners you already have can lead to interesting ideas and chances to innovate. Continue to develop and nurture those relationships so you are ready to formalize those partnerships and apply for grant opportunities when they are available.



ARP: CORONAVIRUS CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

The Capital Projects Fund allows for investment in high-quality broadband infrastructure as well as other connectivity infrastructure, devices, and equipment. Treasury encourages consultation with the statewide entity or office that oversees broadband planning and implementation, where such an entity or office exists, when planning for the use of Capital Projects Fund grant funding. In addition to supporting broadband, it also provides flexibility for each State, territory, freely associated state, and Tribal Government to make investments in other Capital Projects designed to directly enable work, education, and health monitoring and that meet Treasury's other criteria. The Capital Projects Fund also provides flexibility for each Recipient to identify communities to be served by Capital Projects, so long as the Recipient can demonstrate that said communities have critical needs related to work, education, and health monitoring that the Capital Project intends to address.

For a Capital Project to be an eligible use of Capital Projects Fund grant funds, it must meet all of the following criteria:

- The Capital Project invests in capital assets designed to directly enable work, education, and health monitoring.
- The Capital Project is designed to address a critical need that resulted from or was made apparent or exacerbated by the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- The Capital Project is designed to address a critical need of the community to be served by it.

ELIGIBILITY

Congress has allocated funding from the Capital Projects Fund to states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico; territories and freely associated states; and Tribal governments and the State of Hawaii (for Native Hawaiian Programs).

DEADLINE

Applications are to be submitted by December 27, 2021. Future deadlines are not anticipated.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

<https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/capital-projects-fund>

FOUNDATION GRANTS 101

By Sydney Stapleton

No matter what type of public sector or nonprofit entity you are, foundation grants are a unique opportunity for you to receive funding support. According to Cause IQ there are over 132,000 private foundations within the United States. As that number continues to grow, nonprofits have an opportunity to diversify their funding and create new partnerships between themselves and foundation funders.

WHAT ARE FOUNDATIONS?

When it comes to foundations, there are two main types. First is a public foundation. A **public foundation** is just another way to say a public charity, think Make-A-Wish Foundation or The Susan G. Komen Foundation. These nonprofit organizations get donations from individuals, the government, corporations, and private foundations to pay for their operations and programs.

A **private foundation**, like a public foundation, has a charitable mission that it supports. However, private foundations are not the same as a public charity because they are funded and controlled by an individual, family, or corporation. Examples of private foundations include The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Walton Family Foundation, and the Coca-Cola Foundation. While some public foundations make grant awards, most grant funding comes from private foundations.

HOW ARE FOUNDATION GRANTS DIFFERENT FROM GOVERNMENT GRANTS?

Governmental grants offer some of the highest funding amounts of all grant makers. Often with that high award comes having matching funds, a large pool competing of organizations applying for funding, and long applications that require detailed planning and statistical data to back up need and proposed solutions. By contrast **foundation grants** often require much simpler application processes. Application structure will vary by foundation but do not have the same complexity or burden of proof as with a government-sourced grant. They typically do not require matching funds and have smaller pools of applicants. The tradeoff is that foundation grants typically award smaller amounts of funding than those you may receive from a government grant maker.

WHAT MAKES A FOUNDATION A GOOD FIT?

Foundations, just like other nonprofits, have their own missions that they are looking to support. In order to successfully write a foundation proposal, you'll need to find foundations whose missions align with your organization and your project goals. It is also important to make sure the foundation offers an amount of funding that matches your project needs. You don't want to complete an entire application looking to get \$50,000 in funding only to later realize the foundation only awards \$500 grants. Some foundations have specific populations that they are looking to support, this can be groups like the elderly, minority students, individuals with disabilities, or even stray animals. When reviewing a foundation grant application make certain the population you serve aligns with the demographic group the foundation would like to see their funding benefit.

Remember, the key to any successful grant application is finding a foundation whose mission and purpose for grant funding aligns with your organizational mission and project aim. You don't want to waste both your and the foundation's time by completing an application if there isn't this fit.

WHERE DO I START?

Start local. Many communities have local community foundations that support their regional nonprofit organizations. While they often provide smaller grants, there is less competition compared to larger foundation funders. Local foundations are also more likely to continue supporting organizations they have relationships with year after year compared to national grant makers. Connect with similar organizations in your area about where they receive their foundations funding from. Nonprofits often announce award funding through press releases, so keep an eye out to see where local foundation funding is coming from. Once you know your local foundation landscape start branching out to regional and national funders. Continue to search for foundations that align with your organization's mission and vision. Keep in mind your project goals, award amount, and populations served in your search for national funding. There are a variety of online databases that provide information on national foundation grant makers. As your search expands your competition will likely be steeper with more applicants from all over the country being able to apply. Don't be discouraged! If you have a thorough and well written project proposal and your mission aligns with the foundation, then you're well on your way to getting funded.





ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT (AFG)

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

The purpose of the AFG Program is to enhance the safety of the public and firefighters with respect to fire and fire-related hazards by providing direct financial assistance for critically needed resources to equip and train emergency personnel, enhance operational efficiencies, foster interoperability, and support community resilience.

There are three types of eligible applications:

- **Operations and Safety** - This includes five fundable activities -
 - Training
 - Equipment
 - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
 - Wellness and Fitness
 - Modifications to Facilities
- **Vehicle Acquisition** - New, custom, or stock AFG Program-compliant Vehicles are eligible for funding
- **Regional Projects** - Any eligible entity may act as a host applicant and apply for large-scale projects on behalf of itself and any number of other local AFG eligible organizations that will be participating partners in the award. Joint/Regional projects should achieve greater cost effectiveness and regional efficiency and resilience.

ELIGIBILITY

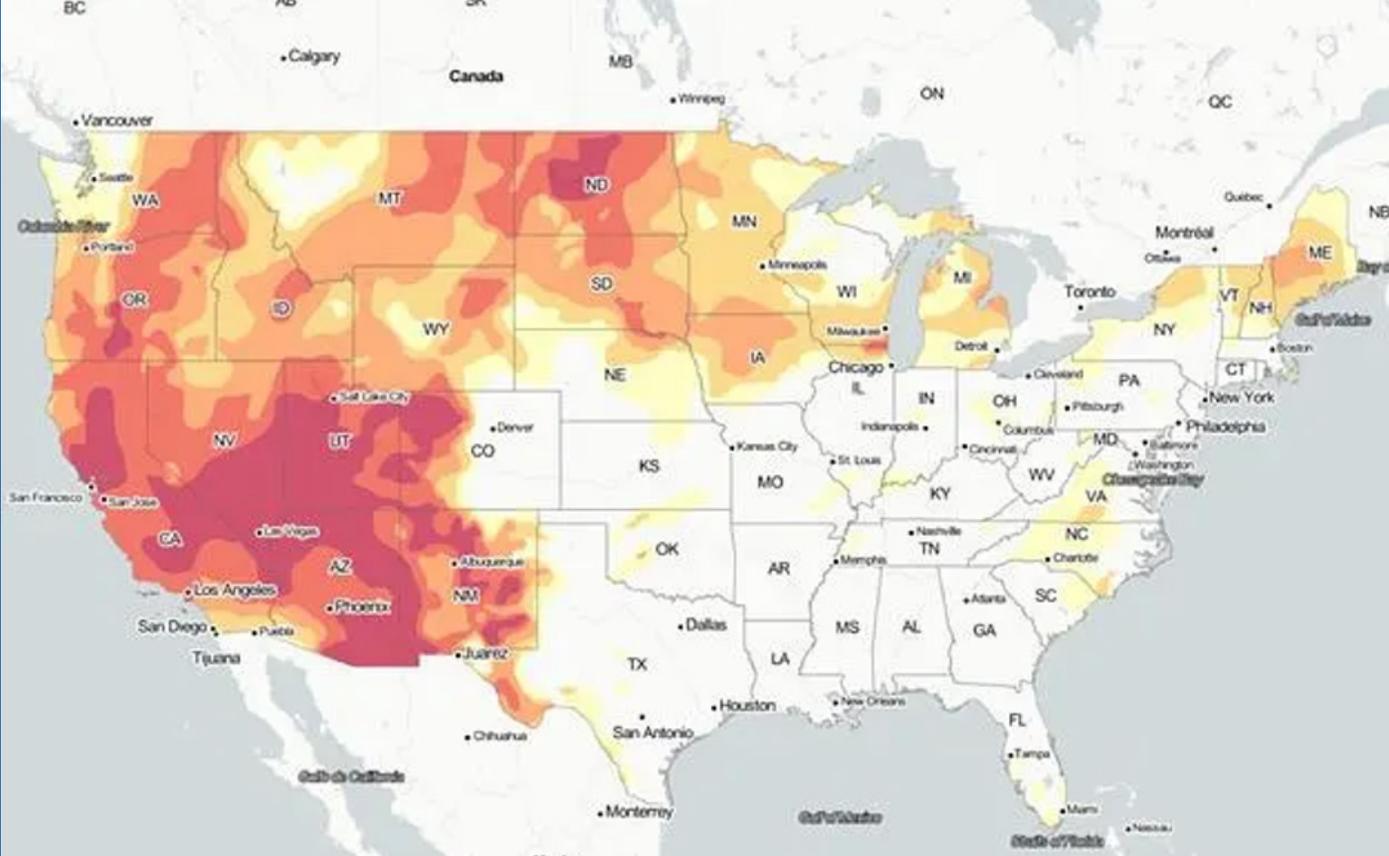
Eligible applicants include municipal fire departments and nonprofit EMS organizations. EMS organizations cannot be affiliated with a hospital. State Fire Training Academies are also welcome to apply.

DEADLINE

Applications were to be submitted by February 12, 2021. A similar deadline is anticipated, annually.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

<http://www.fema.gov/assistance-firefighters-grant>



Map of the 2021 Wildfire Season¹

GRANT FUNDING FOR FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

By Shannon Day

As of September 30, approximately [six million acres](#)² have burned in the United States in 2021. That is roughly the size of either the entire state of New Hampshire or Vermont having been completely decimated beyond recognition by fire. Every day we hear stories about firefighters, [career and volunteer alike](#)³, risking their lives to contain ever-increasing wildfires.

Fire departments are having difficulty [keeping up](#)⁴ as wildfires increase in size, frequency, and deadliness each year due to [climate change](#)⁵, over-development, and generations of poor land management.

With the increasing challenges fire departments face, many look to additional funding sources to help address these challenges. These sources include the [Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\)](#)⁶, the [U.S. Department of Agriculture \(USDA\)](#)⁷, and private and corporate foundations.

In response to [budget shortfalls](#)⁸ created by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the [American Rescue Plan Act](#)⁹ was passed on March 11, 2021. This act provided an additional \$200,000,000 to the [Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant \(SAFER\)](#)¹⁰ program, an additional \$100,000,000 to the [Emergency Management Performance Grant \(EMPG\)](#)¹¹ program, and an additional \$100,000,000 to the [Assistance to Firefighters Grant \(AFG\)](#)¹² program.

FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG)

The primary goal of AFG is to meet the daily firefighting and emergency response needs of fire departments and emergency medical services (EMS) organizations.

Since its inception in 2001, AFG has provided more than \$12 billion to help firefighters and other first responders obtain critical resources necessary for protecting the public and emergency personnel from fires and related hazards.

While program priorities may change year to year, AFG has three main funding categories: Operations and Safety, Vehicle Acquisition, and Regional Projects.

An additional \$100 million was appropriated to the AFG program through the American Rescue Plan in March. Further details on this supplemental funding are pending.

Fire Prevention and Safety Grant Program (FP&S)

This year the FP&S Program provided \$35.5 million to conduct fire prevention education and training.

In 2021, priority areas included community and wildfire risk reduction, code enforcement, arson investigation, regional programs, and research and development.

STATE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant Program (VFA)

The USDA provides passthrough funding to each state for administering its VFA program. The program provides assistance to state foresters and other officials to organize, train, and equip fire departments in rural communities with populations of 10,000 or fewer. Funding amounts, priorities, and application deadlines vary by state.

Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)

FEMA provides passthrough funding to each state for administering its EMPG program. In 2021, \$355.1 million was provided to assist in preparing for all hazards. This includes projects that address emerging threats, including cybersecurity, and projects that enable continuous operation of critical business and government functions – including those essential to human health, safety, and economic security.

In March, an additional \$100 million in stimulus funding was appropriated to the EMPG program through the American Rescue Plan; funds were [allocated to states](#)¹³ using the same formula as the traditional EMPG program. Deadlines for EMPG and supplemental ARP funding vary by state.

Wildfires increase in size, frequency, and deadliness each year.





Determining your organization's grant readiness is critical.

FOUNDATION FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Below are some examples of national foundation funding opportunities for fire and EMS initiatives. If your agency has an existing relationship with a local foundation, approach them about your current project. The history you have with a funder will be a boon in your grant-seeking quest. And if you don't currently have relationships with local foundations, start them! Don't be afraid to reach out to funders.

Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation

The Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation provides quarterly grants to assist first responders and public safety organizations within 60 miles of a Firehouse Subs restaurant in acquiring life-saving equipment and resources to protect and save lives in their communities.

The Leary Firefighters Foundation

The Leary Firefighters Foundation provides annual grant funding for training, equipment, and technology for paid and volunteer fire departments in the U.S.

F.M. Global Fire Prevention Grant Program

FM Global offers quarterly grants to fire departments and community organizations to support a wide array of fire prevention, preparedness, and control efforts. These efforts may include pre-fire planning, fire prevention education and training, and arson prevention/fire investigation.

BECOMING GRANT READY

Before beginning an application for any grant, your organization must answer the question: "Are We Grant Ready?" Determining your organization's grant readiness is beyond merely a recommended best practice – to avoid failure, it is mandatory. Below are ten steps to determining your agency's grant readiness:

1. Be honest with yourself. Does your organization have the resources to not only apply for the grant but manage it if you win?
2. Conduct a needs assessment for your department – What needs attention? What specific benefits would grants provide to those areas?
3. Grants fund projects, not just products. Can you fit the product you need with the funder's priorities?
4. Gather the information you will need for your proposal, including financial, census, and organizational data.
5. Reach out to other area agencies to identify common needs that may be combined into a regional grant application project.
6. Start a secure yet accessible file for storing all the above information.
7. Build your internal team – who in your organization needs to be involved, and what role will each person play?
8. Foster and encourage partnerships within the community. This may include municipal government officials, local businesses/Chamber of Commerce members, non-profit organizations, and private individuals. Collaboration is key.
9. Keep a calendar, circle the application deadline in red marker, and work your way back from that date. Set milestones and keep to them.
10. Plan regular meetings with your team to keep everyone involved and on track.

This article has provided some of the tools to get you started on your grant funding path. Now it is time to take the reins and get your project funded!

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TWO YEAR INSTITUTIONS AND THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

By Christina Fernandez

As a community or technical college, applying for a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant can seem intimidating. Partly because the NSF is perceived to only fund large research related projects, that usually aren't taking place at 2-year institutions. However, this perception is not entirely true. The NSF recognizes the vital role that community and technical colleges play in continuing education and has been working to create more funding opportunities for 2-year institutions.

Historically, NSF grant submission rates and the rate for successful awards have been lower for 2-year colleges compared to their 4-year college and university peers. This pattern holds true across almost all major federal granting agencies. However, if community and technical colleges are ever going to access a larger portion of NSF and other available grant funding, first we must explore some of the more prominent reasons why they are hesitant in the first place. Only then can we look towards solutions – and tips to feel more confident about applying.

WHY GOING AFTER NSF GRANTS AS A 2-YEAR INSTITUTION CAN FEEL INTIMIDATING:

Concern 1: Time

Time and attention are finite within 2-year institutions. Community and technical college faculty are known for having the highest teaching loads within higher education. Being that there are no graduate students enrolled at 2-year institutions and many of the students are part-time or transient, faculty is usually left with no teaching assistants and a lack of support. Due to these larger workloads, it is often difficult for faculty to take on the extra responsibility of writing a successful grant proposal.



Going after an NSF grant can feel intimidating, but it is not impossible! Just remember to plan ahead, think critically, and communicate with others about what your ultimate goals are.

Concern 2: Resources

Not enough resources to commit to a grant project. 2-year institutions might be deterred from going after large federal grants because they fear the hidden costs of grant implementation. The biggest cost that can come from grant implementation is budget match requirements. Some NSF programs (and federal programs in general) can require grantees to match the grant award in whole or in part. For example, if a grant award of \$1,000,000 has a required cost match of 50% then the institution must demonstrate how they will provide an additional \$500,000. As you can imagine this can lead to additional financial burdens for a smaller institution.

Another hidden cost that arises concern in 2-year institutions is the expectation that grant activities must be sustained at the end of the grant period. Because grants are interested in a sustainability plan, institutions must be prepared to explain how their project will be self-sustained after the life of the grant. This could be especially challenging for an institution that has a very tight budget.

Further, not all 2-year institutions have a designated grant writer or an experienced Principal Investigator (PI) on hand. Large grant proposals require a lot of moving parts which require expertise in all areas, including grant writing/experience. Grant writers play an essential role in compiling all these moving parts in a format required by the grant maker. Usually, if an institution does not have a grant writer, PIs or experienced faculty take the lead in writing the proposal. This type of experienced faculty is not always available within a 2-year institution, especially if this is their first time going after an NSF grant.

Concern 3: Highly Competitive

Grant seeking within the NSF is highly competitive. The NSF receives over 50,000 proposals for research, education, and training projects annually¹. Of these, between 23% and 27% have typically received funding after a competitively reviewed process. Some institutions apply more than once to the same opportunity and still get denied. This can be very discouraging for an institution who has committed a lot of its resources to writing its first proposal. Not all institutions have the luxury for several rounds of trial and error when it comes to applying to the same grant multiple times, which is usually what it takes to receive an NSF grant.





WAYS TO FEEL PREPARED WHEN TACKLING LARGE FEDERAL GRANTS

Though it can seem daunting and intimidating to go after an NSF grant, it is not impossible! One of the best ways to feel prepared when going after a large grant is to look at the types of projects that the organization has previously funded. This information is usually public, especially within the state and federal grant landscape. For example, the NSF provides several avenues in which you can search for past awardees on its website. Viewing past projects can offer insight into the types of proposals, research questions or learning outcomes, and award amounts that were successful in the past. Reviewing past awardees can also be helpful in case you recognize a PI or an organization that you might have a relationship with, in which case you can ask them directly how the application and implementation process went. This can also be your chance to discuss any concerns of continuing budget costs.

Further, leveraging and fostering partnerships to collaborate on a project can not only provide stress relieving advice but can also make your application more competitive. These partners can provide their own expertise and experience with the NSF which can add a competitive edge to your proposal. Especially if you do not have grant experienced faculty. The NSF is very interested in seeing collaborative projects amongst different departments, institutions, and/or industry partners. So, it is always good to remember that you are not alone! Even though you might have initiated the grant seeking journey, remember it takes a team to put together a successful grant proposal.

A simple but often overlooked rule of thumb is to read and reread the program's description and instructions. It is critical that you know the ins and outs of the programs' goals and objectives to ensure that you are meeting the requirements of the grant. Grant makers will throw out your proposal if not ALL requirements are being met. However, for questions that cannot be answered by reading the application guidance, grant programs tend to host office hours, live Q&A sessions, and or workshops/webinars to give you the opportunity to go more into depth about your project ideas. Take advantage of these resources – other applicants certainly are!

All and all, there are no guarantees of winning a federal grant within your first try. However, that should not discourage anyone from attempting the effort. The lessons learned from the act of submitting is a “win” all on its own. One thing is certain, applying for an NSF grant (or federal grants in general) is a professional development experience that can only benefit your next grant-seeking journey!

1. The National Science Foundation: An Overview .” Congressional Research Service, 9 Apr. 2021, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R46753>

WATERSMART: WATER AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY GRANTS

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

The WaterSMART (Sustain and Manage America's Resources for Tomorrow), the Bureau of Reclamation supports efforts to stretch scarce water supplies and avoid conflicts over water. This initiative advances the U.S. Department of the Interior's priorities, including creating a legacy of conservation stewardship, sustainably developing our energy and natural resources, modernizing our infrastructure through public-private partnerships, striking a regulatory balance, and restoring trust with local communities by improving relationships and communication with states, tribes, local governments, communities, landowners and water users.

Funding is available to support projects that result in quantifiable and sustained water savings and support broader water reliability benefits. This includes projects that seek to:

- Conserve and use water more efficiently;
- Increase the production of hydropower;
- Mitigate conflict risk in areas at a high risk of future water conflict;
- Enable farmers to make additional on-farm improvements in the future, including improvements that may be eligible for Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) funding; and
- Accomplish other benefits that contribute to water supply reliability in the western United States.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants are states, Indian tribes, irrigation districts, water districts, and other organizations with water or power delivery authority. NOTE: Applicants must be located in one of the following states/territories: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Virgin Islands.

DEADLINE

Applications are to be submitted by November 3, 2021. A similar deadline is anticipated, annually.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/weeg/index.html>



THE SHIFTING BROADBAND FUNDING LANDSCAPE

By [Chris Barnes](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the digital divide across the United States and further illustrated how important reliable, high speed internet connections and access to computers are to participating in daily life. As states across the country began to lock down to slow the spread of COVID-19, what we saw was the struggle of low-income communities, both urban and rural, to obtain reliable, affordable broadband internet access. Indeed, the organization BroadbandNow estimates that in 2021, at least 42 million Americans lack access to broadband¹.

As the urgency to close the digital divide has grown, governments have turned to grants to support state and local initiatives that will provide connectivity to their residents. Some of these programs will fund the installation of broadband infrastructure in unserved and underserved communities across the country. Other programs may support community Wi-Fi designed to provide residents with free internet access in areas of their city. And while this article focuses on the funding landscape for state and local governments, there are additional opportunities that libraries, K-12 school districts, and higher education institutes can also potentially leverage to help connect people to the services they need.

Covered below is a snapshot of what the current broadband and connectivity grant funding landscape looks like for states and for local governments, as well as what changes we can potentially expect in that landscape over the coming years.

BROADBAND STIMULUS FUNDING

Not surprisingly, one of the main drivers of broadband funding over the past year has been the stimulus bills passed by the federal government in response to the pandemic. The three major COVID stimulus packages – the CARES Act, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA), and most recently, the American Rescue Plan (ARP) – have sought to support crucial connectivity needs around telehealth, distance learning, and telework.

The CARES Act's **Coronavirus Relief Fund** provided \$150 billion of direct aid to state and local governments to support their immediate needs as they responded to the pandemic, some of which governments spent on technologies to address digital divide issues. However, the ARP's \$350 billion **State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds** signals the Biden administration's interest in supporting long-term, and more deliberate government investments in broadband infrastructure. These funds are allocated to state and local governments, and one of their main eligible expenses is to support investments in broadband infrastructure, with an emphasis on projects that provide symmetrical Internet service of 100 Mbps for download and upload speeds.

And most recently from the American Rescue Plan is the **Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund**, which provides funding to states, territories, and tribal governments to "carry out critical capital projects directly enabling work, education, and health monitoring, including remote options, in response to the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)." Recipients can use these funds to install "high-quality" broadband infrastructure and purchase end-user devices to connect people to the internet.

FEDERAL BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS

Along with these stimulus dollars, there are a small number of recurring federal grant programs that will also fund the installation of necessary middle- and last-mile infrastructure to make internet access possible. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) oversees two of these programs: the **Community Connect Grant Program** and the **Rural eConnectivity Pilot Program**. Both grants are predominately geared toward assisting rural communities that are considered "unserved" (meaning they have no access to broadband internet) or "underserved" (meaning there are no service providers in the area that provide internet speeds of at least 25 Mbps downstream/3 Mbps upstream).

While the USDA programs are focused on connecting rural residents to high-speed internet, successful projects must demonstrate the additional anticipated benefits of a project to a community. For instance, competitive proposals must demonstrate the positive impacts connectivity will bring to the local economy and how this infrastructure addresses challenges local residents face in terms of connectivity.

BROADBAND-FRIENDLY GRANTS

Unlike broadband infrastructure grants, “broadband-friendly” grants will support connectivity solutions as components of a larger project but will generally not fund the installation of broadband infrastructure. Broadband-friendly grants can be excellent opportunities for urban areas looking to bridge the digital divide in their communities. Larger urban areas are often excluded from broadband infrastructure grants because they aren’t considered “unserved” or “underserved,” given that they already have service providers in their area who can provide high-speed internet service. However, the issue remains that many simply cannot afford subscriptions to these services, and so local governments have looked to find ways to provide more affordable, or free, internet access to those residents.

Many broadband-friendly grants are designed to support community development initiatives, where a public Wi-Fi project might better enable residents to do things such as find jobs, obtain digital literacy skills, or set up telehealth appointments. Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) **Community Development Block Grant** and **Choice Neighborhoods** program are two examples of community development grant programs that will support connectivity initiatives as part of a larger project if they benefit low- to moderate-income individuals.

WHAT’S NEXT?

With the continued urgency to address the digital divide, there are a range of new broadband grant funding opportunities that we can expect to see in the coming years. Currently, the Biden administration’s \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act making its way through Congress is the newest legislative effort to expand broadband access. It offers \$65 billion in grant funding for broadband expansion, with \$42.45 billion going toward the **Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEADP)**. This program would provide funding to states for broadband deployments to areas that are unserved, underserved, and/or high-poverty.

The broadband programs in this new legislation reflect a growing trend of putting more money in the hands of the states to expand Internet access within their borders. While some states have already created their own grant programs to do this, others have begun to provide state broadband grants with some of their State Fiscal Recovery Funds. As states take a greater role in deploying connectivity to their residents, many have also created broadband offices, agencies, and/or task forces to assist them in coordinating these efforts. While the duties of these agencies vary widely across states (and not each state has a dedicated office to broadband), they can provide coordination, planning, and technical assistance for local government broadband efforts. And for states who don’t yet have an office, the BEADP program allows them to set aside 5% of their award to establish one.

We can also expect that broadband infrastructure funding will also prioritize projects that use “future-proof” technologies such as fiber-optic networks that are scalable and can accommodate higher internet speeds in the future. The guidance for two stimulus programs from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act – the **Broadband Infrastructure Program** and the **Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program** both gave priority to proposals that will deploy these technologies.

The Biden Administration has signaled its interest in “lifting barriers that prevent municipally-owned or affiliated providers and rural electric co-ops from competing on an even playing field with private providers.”² This interest in finding new ways to expand internet access to communities who often can’t get reliable, speedy access from private service providers will likely mean that there will be even more funding for broadband grant programs for years to come.

1. <https://broadbandnow.com/research/fcc-broadband-overreporting-by-state>

2. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/03/31/fact-sheet-the-american-jobs-plan/>

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

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

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

All projects supported by IUSE: EHR must:

- Demonstrate a strong rationale for project objectives or incorporate and build on educational practices that are demonstrably effective
- Contribute to the development of exemplary undergraduate STEM education
- Add to the body of knowledge about what works in undergraduate STEM education and the conditions that lead to improved STEM teaching and learning
- Measure project progress and achievement of project goals

ELIGIBILITY

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

DEADLINE

Deadlines vary based on the category to which you apply:

- For IUSE Level 1, 2, 3, and Capacity-Building Proposals
 - Full application are due July 21, 2021
 - And then the Third Wednesday in July, Annually
- For IUSE Level 1 and Capacity-Building Proposals
 - Full application are due January 19, 2022
 - Third Wednesday in January, Annually Thereafter

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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

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

FUNDED PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

FUNDED ORGANIZATION

Rochester Institute of Technology

PROJECT TITLE

Automated Feedback in Undergraduate Computing Theory Courses

AMOUNT FUNDED

\$315,417

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Although understanding computing theory concepts is very important, it is challenging. Typically, as a first step, students in computing theory classes learn about various models of computation. To understand more complex computational issues, students need to fully comprehend the possibilities and limitations of these models. JFLAP (Java Formal Languages and Automata Package) is a widespread tool that provides a way for students to interact with these concepts. However, like other interactive tools in this area, it does not provide detailed feedback on student solutions. This project will build a feedback and grading tool on top of JFLAP, to increase the likelihood that the feedback tool will have broad applicability. To accomplish this goal, the project will develop and evaluate the tool in the context of three research areas: (1) Computer Science Education: Do students who use the tool understand theoretical computer science concepts better than students who do not use the tool? (2) Theoretical Computer Science: How can software generate a convincing reason for why a student solution is incorrect? and (3) Artificial Intelligence: How can feedback be given about the quality of a student's solution? The project's research and software development activities will involve ten undergraduate students, who will be recruited with emphasis on including women and deaf/hard-of-hearing students. Thus, the project will directly contribute to these students' scientific and professional development. Project outcomes will be disseminated at scientific conferences and workshops, as well as at the University's innovation fair, which is attended by 35,000 visitors, including middle and high school students. Developing the feedback tool and completing research on its effectiveness has the potential to improve instruction and learning of computing theory.

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION

https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward?AWD_ID=1819546&HistoricalAwards=false

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE

<https://www.rit.edu/>

“IS THAT HOW THIS WORKS?” ESSER FUNDS HAVE BEEN LEFT OPEN TO INTERPRETATION

By Patrick Riedy

Believe it or not, we are rapidly approaching two years since the coronavirus emergency declaration (which occurred on March 13, 2020). K-12 schools have faced many challenges since then, the likes of which do not need to be rehashed here. Many of us have lived — and continue to live out those difficulties. To mitigate these risks and challenges brought upon by the pandemic, the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) program provided an unprecedented \$169,200,000,000 in stimulus-sourced passthrough funding – flowing first from US Department of Education to State Education Agencies, and then to Local Education Agencies and charter schools with LEA-status.

The ESSER funds can be used by schools to do a variety of things, including purchase educational technology to support distance learning and address learning loss. Notably, in the most recent stimulus bill, the American Rescue Plan (ARP), a few changes were made to those eligible uses. One of the more significant additions outlines “developing strategies & implementing public health protocols in line with CDC policy for safe reopening and operation of school facilities” as an allowable expense. Of those [strategies outlined by the CDC](#)¹, key points identified for the safe reopening and operation of schools are relatively straightforward. In fact, evidence suggests strictly implemented prevention strategies have helped many K-12

schools open, and remain open, for in-person instruction. These strategies include testing, vaccination for teachers and staff, and the consistent use of prevention strategies, “including universal and correct use of masks and physical distancing.”

As part of this most recent ESSER bucket, states were required within 30 days of receipt to make a publicly available plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. The intent of this program was to get students back in school and to do so as safely as possible. So, why have certain states, namely [Arizona](#)², [Florida](#)³, [Iowa](#)⁴, [Oklahoma](#)⁵, [South Carolina](#)⁶, [Tennessee](#)⁷, [Texas](#)⁸, and [Utah](#)⁹ received letters from the U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel A. Cardona, Ed. D. pleading those state leaders to reconsider laws and executive orders that block school districts from voluntarily adopting universal mask mandates? Why has [Florida](#)¹⁰ failed to submit their state plan for their ARP ESSER funds? Can [Arizona](#)¹¹ create grant opportunities only eligible to schools without mask mandates? Should schools in states such as [Connecticut](#), [Kentucky](#), [Iowa](#) or [Wisconsin](#)¹² prioritize these funds for learning or athletic facilities? And, perhaps most imminent, how has all this affected the allocation of stimulus funding to schools?



With regards to that last question, most schools, except for those in Florida, have seen these ARP ESSER applications processed and funds allocated in a timely fashion. The answers to those other questions are either very simple or complex, depending on your perspective. However, one thing remains certain as the pandemic looms large— K-12 schools will need these stimulus funds and appropriate guidance to address any number of issues, whether that be continued learning loss, short and long-term mental health issues, or increased risk of infection due to variants. Slowing down these funds jeopardizes a speedy return normalcy.

If nothing else, this pandemic has revealed schools are essential – not just for instruction of young minds but also for the many social and emotional services schools provide in addition to educational resources. Schools have patiently waited to see reflected in their budgets the support needed

to do these things safely and effectively. When we take a step back and look at the variety of ways ESSER funds can be used, the money is there to alleviate pressure on students and teachers, not held up to score political points. If state and local officials want to help educators and students, perhaps their time would be better spent clarifying best use of these funds and advocating for additional supports.

The fact remains, that any delay in distributing these monies to schools ultimately harms the health and safety of students, faculty, staff, and the community-at-large. As such, it may be in your best interest to find out if these funds are being held up by your state officials. If that's the case, it never hurts to reach out to their offices and reiterate the many ways this pandemic has impacted schools. And then ask yourself: Do you know what your local district plans to do with these funds? Because that answer may surprise you.

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 2. Cardona, Miguel A. "Letter to Arizona on Protecting the Health and Safety of K-12 Students." American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief, Office of Elementary & Secondary Education, 18 Aug. 2021, <https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/08/21-006970-Letter-from-Secretary-Cardona-Arizona-final-signed.pdf>.
 3. Cardona, Miguel A. "Letter to Florida on Protecting the Health and Safety of K-12 Students." American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief, Office of Elementary & Secondary Education, 13 Aug. 2021, <https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/08/Letter-from-Secretary-Cardona-FL-08-13-21.pdf>.
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 5. Cardona, Miguel A. "Letter to Oklahoma on Protecting the Health and Safety of K-12 Students." American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief, Office of Elementary & Secondary Education, 18 Aug. 2021, <https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/08/21-006973-Letter-from-Secretary-Cardona-Oklahoma-final-signed.pdf>.
 6. Cardona, Miguel A. "Letter to South Carolina on Protecting the Health and Safety of K-12 Students." American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief, Office of Elementary & Secondary Education, 18 Aug. 2021, <https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/08/21-006974-Letter-from-Secretary-Cardona-South-Carolina-final-signed.pdf>.
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 11. Binkley, Collin. "Arizona Can't Use COVID Money for Anti-Mask Grants, Feds Say." AP NEWS, Associated Press, 5 Oct. 2021, <https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-doug-ducey-arizona-health-education-eeef3cfa74d609eecdcd71d6cc2cdd3c>.
 12. Binkley, Collin. "Flush with Covid-19 Aid, Schools Steer Funding to Sports." AP NEWS, Associated Press, 6 Oct. 2021, <https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-school-funding-sports-5b468b260ebd2593e53f03f9104d9bca>.



PUBLIC WORKS AND ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

EDA provides strategic investments on a competitive merit basis to support economic development, foster job creation, and attract private investment in economically distressed areas of the United States. Grants and cooperative agreements made under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets and support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities.

Public Works - Through the Public Works program, the Economic Development Administration (EDA) provides catalytic investments to help distressed communities build, design, or engineer critical infrastructure and facilities that will help implement regional development strategies and advance bottom-up economic development goals to promote regional prosperity. The Public Works program provides resources to meet construction and/or the design of infrastructure needs of communities to enable them to become more economically competitive.

Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) - Through the EAA program, EDA provides investments that support a wide range of construction and non-construction activities (including infrastructure, design and engineering, technical assistance, economic recovery strategies, and capitalization or re-capitalization of Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) projects) in regions experiencing severe economic dislocations that may occur suddenly or over time. EDA utilizes EAA investments to provide resources that help communities experiencing or anticipating economic dislocations to plan and implement specific solutions to leverage their existing regional economic advantages to support economic development and job creation.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants include (1) District Organizations; (2) Indian Tribes or a consortium of Indian Tribes; (3) State, county, city, or other political subdivisions of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; (4) Institutions of higher education; and (5) Public or private non-profit organizations or associations acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a State.

DEADLINE

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.eda.gov/funding-opportunities/>

ADVANCED TRANSPORTATION & CONGESTION MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGIES DEPLOYMENT (ATCMTD)

FUNDED PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

FUNDED ORGANIZATION

City of Santa Barbara

PROJECT TITLE

Santa Barbara Advanced Metering Infrastructure Project (Phase 2)

AMOUNT FUNDED

\$1,500,000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City of Santa Barbara, located in southern California, will install advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) equipment and implement a data management system, along with a customer portal that will support 27,000 primarily residential water meters that were installed in a previous phase of this overall AMI project. By providing real-time water use data about leaks and abnormal use patterns, the project is expected to result in annual water savings of 631 acre-feet and will better prepare the City for extended drought conditions. The water conserved will offset groundwater pumping and reduce the City's dependence on water imported through the State Water Project.

FOR MORE AWARD INFORMATION

https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/weeg/docs/2020/2020_WEEG_Project_Descriptions.pdf

ORGANIZATION WEBSITE

<https://www.santabarbaraca.gov/>



PURSUING GRANT FUNDING FOR WATER AND ENERGY UTILITIES

By Richard Campo

State and local governments, as well as many nonprofits and utility companies, have grown more interested in utilizing grant funding to implement smart water, resilient infrastructure, and economic development projects. Much of this increasing interest may be attributed to concerns about the effects of climate change, the aging of utilities infrastructure, and new sustainable utilities technology. Fortunately, there are many funding opportunities for these types of projects, coming from a variety of funders, including federal, state, and private grantmakers. One of the largest funders of utilities projects is the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF), which provide grants to states to offer low-interest loans for water utilities projects. Following are examples of utilities-supporting grants and grant-fundable projects.

SAMPLE OF UTILITIES GRANTS

One of the most popular water utilities grants we see annually is the WaterSMART (Sustain and Manage America's Resources for Tomorrow) program from the Department of the Interior (DOI). The goal of the WaterSMART program is to increase the water supply in the arid American West by modernizing existing infrastructure. Three of the most technology-friendly grant programs under the WaterSMART umbrella include:

- Water and Energy Efficiency Grants
- Title XVI Water Reclamation and Reuse Grants
- Drought Response Program Grants

Diving deeper into the first, DOI allocated \$15,000,000 in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 to Water and Energy Efficiency Grants, which focuses on water conservation and renewable energy projects led by states, localities, Native American tribes, water or irrigation districts, and nonprofits in the Western United States. One common technology project we see is installing or updating Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition and Automation (SCADA) components. WaterSMART Energy and Efficiency Grants are a great way to fund these projects, though it is important to note that a 50% non-federal match is required. Notably, these grants will also fund renewable energy projects related to water management and delivery, such as hydropower or replacing fossil fuel-powered water pumps with solar, wind, or geothermal-powered pumps. Overall, WaterSMART is an excellent program for applicants in the Western United States looking to modernize their water infrastructure.

One smart water solution is advanced metering infrastructure to conserve water in dry areas.

Another great technology-friendly utilities grant is called Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC), administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The goal of BRIC is to mitigate the damage resulting from potential hazards such as extreme weather events or “chronic stressors,” which refers to a location’s inherent risk of damage, such as flood risk in low-lying areas or hurricane risk in the southeastern United States. BRIC is a good source of funding for projects to protect utilities infrastructure from damage caused by natural hazards such as hurricanes, blizzards, earthquakes, heat waves, and cold snaps such as the one that hit Texas last winter and disabled portions of the states’ electrical grid. In FY 2021, a total of \$1 billion was available from BRIC for states, territories, and tribal governments. States are then able to subgrant their BRIC funds to local governments. Notably, this program requires a 25% non-federal match. Any technology you would be interested in purchasing needs to tie back into the overall project goals. For example, you may be interested in improving the cybersecurity of local utilities. To tie that into the project, you need to explain how the cybersecurity solution is necessary to protect the utilities infrastructure in the event of a disaster. Some systems may go offline due to the disaster, and you will want to maintain adequate security despite the damage.

Lastly, one grant opportunity you may not think of at first for a utilities project is the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance (PWEAA) program from the Economic Development Administration (EDA). This program is designed to support economic development and job creation in economically distressed areas. The EDA was appropriated \$118.5 million for the Public Works program and \$37 million for the Economic Adjustment Assistance Program in FY 2020. Applicants must provide a 50% match. If interested in leveraging PWEAA for technology purchases, you will want to explain how the technology is important to achieving economic development goals such as job creation, attracting private investment, and workforce training. For example, if you want to implement a smart grid project, you would discuss how the project would create jobs for workers, help build those workers’ skills, and attract more investment from businesses. One additional thing to note about PWEAA is that the EDA encourages applicants to work with their regional EDA representative to iron out the project. This can be a great opportunity to know what the funder is looking for, which allows you to adjust your project to better align it with the EDA’s goals, and therefore make you more likely to receive funding.



Water utilities infrastructure needs to be resilient in the face of extreme weather and climate change.

PURSUING GRANT FUNDING

When looking for utilities grants, the first thing to consider is what kind of project you are proposing, rather than the purchases you may also have in mind. Typically, grant funders are interested in funding projects that will further their mission, such as reducing conserving water in dry areas, protecting critical infrastructure during natural disasters, and creating jobs to develop struggling local economies. The applicant's job in writing a grant application will be connecting the dots between the purchases you want to make and the funder's goals for the grant program. When it comes to grant funding for utilities, there are some great technology-friendly grants to modernize your area's infrastructure.

The lessons you can learn from grantseeking for technology to improve utilities are also broadly applicable to other types of projects like smart cities, public safety, and rural broadband. Grant funders will be interested in your project and how the technology you need is necessary to meet the project's goals. If you are in your organization's IT department, you will likely want to reach out to your contacts in the finance department or any grants staff if your organization has them to get the documentation you need to apply for a grant and get the required signatures. You will also want to keep your vendors in the loop since they will have the best information about the technology solutions you intend to purchase. Lastly, don't forget to collaborate with other departments at your state or locality to share the workload and bring in additional expertise. Now that you're ready, start looking for utilities grants that fit your project on Grants.gov or your state's relevant agency websites. Once you find the right grant, bring your team together and start preparing your application. Happy grantseeking and good luck!

Upgrading utilities systems can be a great way to create jobs and improve local infrastructure to attract businesses.



GRANTS OFFICE ON THE ROAD

Are you attending? Stop by our booth to say hello and check out our sessions below.

Grant Professionals Association Annual Conference

Hyatt Regency, Seattle, WA
(In-person and online)



Friday, November 5 at 9:30AM PT (502 Cowlitz and Streaming)

Your FY2022 Education Forecast! Grants in the USED Budget & Other Federal Funding Opportunities

Friday, November 5 at 11:00AM PT (512 Willapa and Streaming)

Beyond the Bodycam: Grant Funding for Public Safety Technology in 2022

To learn more, visit <https://grantprofessionals.org/page/annualconference>

Michigan Moonshot Broadband Summit

Park Place Hotel and Conference Center, Traverse City, MI
(In person conference, no booth, no streaming)

Tuesday, November 9, 2021 at 1:25PM EST

The Grant Landscape, Federal and Statewide Opportunities,
and the Michigan Moonshot Community Grant Fund



To learn more, visit <https://www.merit.edu/community/events/broadband/>

UPCOMING WEBCASTS:

Using Stimulus Funding to Collaborate and Secure All your Data

November 2, 2021 at 2pm eastern

Sponsored by TD Synnex, Veeam, and Microsoft

Register [HERE](#)

Mobility Solutions for First Responders: Using Tablets in the Field and How to Fund Them

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