Appropriations Overview

Labor, Health and Human Services, Education (LHHS)

Overview

The Senate Appropriations Committee is expected to accept Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) requests for next year’s fiscal year 2026 (FY26) appropriations bill. Senator Murray and her office will once again solicit CDS project proposals from eligible recipients. This document serves as a guide for potential and returning applicants and recipients. Should you have any questions after reviewing this document, please reach out to Joe Herrbach ([joe\_herrbach@murray.senate.gov](mailto:joe_herrbach@murray.senate.gov)) and Abby Laver ([abby\_laver@murray.senate.gov](mailto:abby_laver@murray.senate.gov)).

General Guidance

* A good project will have flexibility in budget and timeline. Does the project have other funding sources? Does the project have a phased timeline? Can the project be scaled based on available funding? Provide as much information on the project’s flexibility when submitting a CDS application and provide updates to the appropriate staffer if anything changes.
* CDS projects should not be viewed as continuous funding sources and should be distinct from competitive grant opportunities at the relevant agencies. CDS projects should be viewed as a way to jump start an activity or get an existing project fully operable. CDS funding should not be expected to be a sustainable funding stream over time.
* The ability to clearly communicate how the project will execute the mission of the program account it is being requested under is essential. Projects must meet program requirements to be considered eligible. Program requirements are detailed further below in this document.
* Submission of an application does not guarantee that a project will be selected for funding.

**Eligible CDS Accounts**

* Department of Labor—Employment and Training Administration—Training and Employment Services
* Department of Health and Human Services—Administration for Children and Families— Children and Families Services Programs
* Department of Education—Innovation and Improvement—Fund for the Improvement of Education
* Department of Education—Higher Education—Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education

**Required CDS Project Information**

* **Agency or Account** – Projects will only be funded from the accounts listed above.
* **Recipient Name** – Name of the legal entity that would receive the CDS funding.
* **Project Name** – Unique name of the project to easily identify and distinguish the project.
* **Project Purpose** – Brief description of the project (no more than 1-2 sentences). More detailed information should be provided in the Project Detail field.
* **Project Detail** – A detailed summary of the project, which must include the total and major categories of spending for the CDS project accompanied by a short narrative for how each major category of spending supports the Project Purpose. This must explain how specifically the funding will be spent. A detailed line item budget for the proposed project is required (i.e. X for salaries split among X individuals; $X for equipment etc.). Simply noting how much is for “salaries” is not sufficient – it must include a description of how the funding supports the project’s purpose and goals (e.g. what the people will be doing, what the equipment will be used for, etc.). All necessary information must be included in this field and not rely on references to separately-provided supporting materials. More words are not always better, the focus should be concisely providing the necessary information.

**Detailed Information on Eligible CDS Accounts**

# DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

## Employment and Training Administration (ETA)

CDS requests under ETA (through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) demonstration authority) should clearly articulate how proposed projects will meet employment and training needs of workers. Projects will be expected to have measurable outcomes and demonstrate a linkage with the state or local workforce investment system. Generally, these projects should include direct services, which could include career services, training services (including work-based training), supportive services, and other permissible services, as they are defined in WIOA.

Typical activities include training unemployed individuals to increase their skills and obtain employment and enhancing the skills of incumbent workers to get higher-paying jobs. CDS requests should include a basic budget that clearly describes how the funds will be used for specific activities to achieve the project’s goals. CDS funding may be used for the purchase of equipment, but generally only if it is an incidental part of the larger project to provide direct services, such as a 3-D printer for use in a community workshop. A similar standard applies to curriculum development.

CDS funding within ETA cannot be used for construction or renovation of facilities or the purchase of land or buildings, and ETA CDS recipients may not sub-grant to other organizations or agencies.

# DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

# Administration for Children and Families (ACF)

CDS requests within ACF should be submitted through the Children and Families Services Programs account and must fall under one of the following categories:

* **Child Abuse Prevention**—projects to improve the prevention, assessment, identification, and treatment of child abuse and neglect through research, model service improvement, information dissemination, and technical assistance. Projects must serve or target abused and/or neglected children and their families.
* **Social Services Research and Demonstration**—projects to promote the ability of families to thrive through financial self-sufficiency in order to reduce poverty and to promote the healthy development and greater well-being of children and families. Projects can serve a diverse population including:

low-income individuals, children, youth, families, individuals with developmental disabilities, and Native Americans.

CDS funding within ACF cannot be used for construction or renovation of facilities, and ACF CDS recipients may not sub-grant to other organizations or agencies.

# DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## Innovation and Improvement

## Fund for the Improvement of Education (FIE)—Elementary and secondary education CDS requests can be designated under this heading for a wide variety of elementary and secondary education projects, including instructional services, afterschool centers, curricula development, teacher training, acquisition of books and computers, arts education, social and emotional learning activities, full-service community schools, and early childhood education. In general, the focus of elementary and secondary education CDS requests should be providing early childhood or K-12 educational services.

CDS requests to provide and improve special education services at the elementary and secondary levels are also eligible under this heading. These CDS requests may include early intervention services for infants and toddlers, transition services, and postsecondary education services.

Eligible CDS recipients are state education agencies, school districts, colleges and universities, and other public and private nonprofit entities. Generally, CDS requests intended for individual schools are provided to the applicable school district and not directly to the individual school.

CDS funding within FIE cannot be used for construction or renovation of school buildings, except in the case of minor remodeling or minor alterations in a previously completed building, for example as part of technology

upgrades. Daycare and childcare projects that do not include educational services are also not eligible under this account.

## Improvement of Postsecondary Education

Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE)—CDS requests through FIPSE should primarily be focused on improving access to, or the quality of, postsecondary education. This can include a range of activities as authorized and specified in section 741(a) of the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1138(a)). CDS recipients are usually colleges and universities but may include other public and private nonprofit organizations.

Examples of the types of CDS requests that can be funded under FIPSE include projects to hire and train faculty, establish and improve degree programs, improve teacher preparation programs, develop and improve curricula, upgrade technology, equipment, and telecommunications, provide student support, and implement university partnerships with school districts. If a significant portion of CDS funds are expected to be used for the purchase of equipment make sure to note that and include a justification for that use of funds.

CDS funding within FIPSE cannot be used for endowments, or for the construction or renovation of facilities, except in the case of minor remodeling or minor alterations in a previously completed building, for example as part of technology upgrades.