TAMMY DUCKWORTH
U.S. SENATOR FOR ILLINOIS

Federal & State Grant Funding Opportunities Available Through October 2026

Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation Program (PROTECT) Applications Closing Soon!

The PROTECT Competitive Grant Program provides funding to plan for and make surface transportation more resilient to current and future weather events, natural disasters, and changing conditions, such as severe storms, flooding, drought, levee and dam failures, wildfire, rockslides, mudslides, sea level rise, extreme weather, including extreme temperatures, and earthquakes.

The PROTECT Competitive Grant Program has the following categories of funding:

Planning Grants (Title 23 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 176(d)(3)).
Resilience Grants, including:
Resilience Improvement Grants (23 U.S.C. § 176(d)(4)(A)).
Community Resilience and Evacuation Route Grants (23 U.S.C. § 176(d)(4)(B)).
At-Risk Coastal Infrastructure Grants (23 U.S.C. § 176(d)(4)(C)).

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are States, metropolitan planning organizations (MPO), local governments, federally recognized Indian Tribes, public transportation agencies, port authorities, and Federal Land Managing Agencies (FLMA) when applying jointly with a State or group of States. Specific to At-Risk Coastal Infrastructure Grants, eligibility also includes U.S. territories, plus the same entities eligible for the broader program, but limited to coastal States and other specified entities within such States (see 23 U.S.C. § 176(d)(4)(C)(i)).

Eligible Applicants

The PROTECT Competitive Grant Program funds projects that improve the resilience of the surface transportation system, including highways, public transportation, ports, and intercity passenger rail. Program goals include protecting: surface transportation assets by making them more resilient; communities through resilience improvements and strategies that allow for the continued operation or rapid recovery of surface transportation systems; coastal infrastructure; and natural infrastructure that protects and enhances surface transportation assets.

Project proposals must be submitted through Grants.gov by **11:59 p.m. Eastern time on October 9, 2026.**

Education & Labor

State Workforce Agency Unemployment Insurance Resource Planning Targets and Guidelines

This UIPL is to provide states with information about preliminary Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 Unemployment Insurance (UI) State Administration base resource planning targets, with general guidelines for resource planning, and an explanation of how the U.S. Department of Labor (Department) allocates base resources among the states.

Deadline: October 30,2026

NASA Innovative Advanced Concepts (NIAC) Phase I

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Headquarters anticipates release of a solicitation, titled "NASA Innovative Advanced Concepts (NIAC), Phase I," as an Appendix to the Space Technology Mission Directorate (STMD) NASA Research Announcement (NRA), titled "Space Technology Research, Development, Demonstration, and Infusion - 2026 (SpaceTech-REDDI-2026)," on or about **September 28, 2026**.

Deadline: October 28, 2026

Space Technology Research Institutes

Since its beginning, STMD has used a Technology Strategy to guide its investment strategy. The Framework was developed to align with Agency priorities, including the Moon to Mars Objectives and Science Decadal Surveys. The Technology Strategy provides context and traceability from overarching mission needs to high level goals, to the technological advances STMD should prioritize, and the specific technical challenges that must be addressed. The Strategic Framework is also aligned with the NASA TechPort - Taxonomy. The 2024 Civil Space Shortfall Ranking integrates input received from NASA Mission Directorates and Centers, small and large industry organizations, other government agencies, academia, and other interested individuals, to help guide the space technology development and investments. Additional Civil Space Shortfall Ranking information is available at civil-space-shortfall-descriptions-july-2024.pdf For the latest information about STMD, visit Space Technology Mission Directorate - NASA.

Deadline: November 3, 2026

Agriculture, Water, Environment & Energy

Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program (CFP)

CFP is a competitive grant program that provides financial assistance to Indian Tribes, local governments, and qualified conservation non-profit organizations to establish community forests through the fee simple acquisition of private forest land.

Deadline: October 13, 2026

Powering Affordable Reliable Technology (PART) Energy Program

The Rural Utilities Service (RUS or the Agency), a Rural Development (RD) Agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is soliciting Letters of Interest (LOI) for loan Applications, announcing the Application process for those loans, and providing deadlines for Applications from eligible entities under the Powering Affordable Reliable Technology (PART) Energy Program.

Deadline: October 9, 2026

2026 National Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Cost Share Grant Program

The intent of the National Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Cost Share grant program is to advance solutions to the economic, health, and environmental challenges faced by communities. This year's program focuses on advancing community tree resource utilization, which can reduce waste and create value by turning wood generated from pruning, removals, storm events, and pest or disease outbreaks into useful products. These products may include lumber,

slabs, furniture, flooring, biochar, or other materials that strengthen local economies, reduce disposal costs, and improve community resilience.
Deadline: October 12, 2026

Innovative Water Infrastructure Workforce Development Grant

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is soliciting applications under the authority of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) section 1459E to accelerate career pipelines in the water utilities sector and provide access to water utility workforce opportunities. This action advances the Administration's priorities, including the goals of Make America Healthy Again, by focusing on building the nation's water workforce which is critical to ensuring public health and environment protection. Consistent with the law, this action will help inform people about the role of water and wastewater utilities in their communities and increase the awareness of water utility career opportunities.
Deadline: October 15, 2026

Transportation, HUD & Rural Development

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) FAA Contract Tower (FCT) Competitive Grant Program

The Department of Transportation (DOT), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announces the opportunity to apply for up to $100 million in FY 2027 Airport Infrastructure Grant funds for the FCT competitive grant program, made available under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA), Pub. L. 117-58. The purpose of the FCT competitive grant program is to make annual grants available to eligible airports for airport-owned airport traffic control tower (ATCT) projects that address the aging infrastructure of the nation's airports.
Deadline: October 19, 2026

Fair Housing Initiatives Program - Education and Outreach Initiative

The overarching purpose of the FHIP Education and Outreach Initiative (EOI) is to educate the public, housing providers and other stakeholders about their rights and obligations under provisions of fair housing laws, through the development, implementation, carrying out and coordinating or education and outreach programs.
Deadline: November 2, 2026

Department of Justice

BJA FY 2026 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program—Local Formula

The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) is committed to advancing work that furthers the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) mission to keep our country safe and secure and uphold the rule of law and protect the rights of American citizens. OJP provides federal leadership, funding, and other critical resources to directly support law enforcement, combat violent crime, protect American children, provide services to American crime victims, and address public safety challenges, including human trafficking and the opioid crisis. This is a notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) for the BJA FY 2026 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program—Local Formula.
Deadline: October 9, 2026

Arts & Humanities

Inspire Grants for Small Museums (2027)

Inspire Grants for Small Museums (Inspire) is a special initiative of the Museums for America grant program designed to support small museums of all disciplines, including small rural or small remote institutions and small museums that have not previously received federal funding. The program funds project-based efforts to serve the public through educational programs and exhibits, community partnerships, and collections stewardship activities.

Deadline: November 13, 2026

National Leadership Grants for Libraries (2027)

National Leadership Grants for Libraries (NLG-L) projects enhance the quality of library services nationwide. The program supports projects that: promote adult reading, and health and financial literacies; focus on programming and archival practices related to our shared American history; manage and preserve the national information infrastructure; serve the public's information and education needs; enhance library and information services through effective and efficient use of new and emerging technologies; improve community prosperity; provide emergency services to communities during disasters and emergencies; and build collaborative partnerships between libraries, archives, and museums that benefit the communities they serve..

Deadline: November 13, 2026

Museums for America

The Museums for America (MFA) program invests in museums of all sizes – from small to large – and disciplines in project-based efforts to serve the public through educational programs and exhibits, community partnerships, and collections stewardship activities.

Deadline: November 13, 2026

Collaborative Research

The program supports groups of two or more scholars increasing humanistic knowledge through the preparation of a manuscript for print publication, the creation of a scholarly digital project, or the planning of an international collaboration. Projects must pursue significant research questions and lead toward an interpretive product. This year's competition is limited to projects on American history and culture or Western civilization.

Deadline: September 16, 2026

Museum Grants for African American History and Culture (2027)

The Museum Grants for African American History and Culture (AAHC) program builds the capacity of African American museums and supports the growth and development of museum professionals at African American museums. The program supports projects that nurture museum professionals, build institutional capacity, and increase access to museum and archival collections at African American museums and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

Deadline: November 13, 2026

Museum Grants for American Latino History and Culture (2027)

The Museum Grants for American Latino History and Culture (ALHC) program supports projects that build the capacity of American Latino history and culture museums to serve their communities and advance the growth and development of a professional workforce in American Latino cultural institutions.

Deadline: November 13, 2026

Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Services (2027)

The Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Services program (NANH) supports Native American Tribes, Alaska Native Villages, and organizations that primarily serve and represent Native Hawaiians in sustaining heritage, culture, and knowledge. The program supports projects such as educational services and programs, workforce professional development, organizational capacity building, community engagement, and collections stewardship.

Deadline: November 13, 2026

Search Through the Federal Program Inventory!

In 2023, building upon the successful 2020 exploratory pilot effort and recommendations published in the 2021 Report to Congress, OMB launched the Federal Program Inventory, which focuses on Federal financial assistance. **Find grants and assistance opportunities that best fit your organization's needs!**

Other Helpful Resources & State Grant Opportunities

New Funding Opportunity for Energy Efficiency Projects at Public Buildings Providing Local Government Services

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency announced $766,600 in funding through the Public Buildings Energy Efficiency Program for projects that include energy efficiency upgrades identified in an energy efficiency assessment or audit conducted within the last five years. The Efficient and Resilient Public Building Grant Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is now posted.

The Public Building Energy Efficiency Program provides financial assistance for energy efficiency improvements at public buildings owned by municipalities, counties, and other units of local government. Energy efficiency is essential for reducing energy demand, conserving natural resources, and minimizing the environmental impacts associated with energy production.

Examples of eligible projects include building envelope insulation, window replacement, lighting upgrades, programmable thermostats and occupancy sensors, heating and cooling system retrofit, high efficiency appliances, and a transfer switch. An energy efficiency assessment or audit refers to a review of the property conducted by a third-party professional that results in recommendations for improving energy efficiency and/or reducing energy costs.

Grants will be capped at a maximum of $200,000 per grantee. Funding is provided through the U.S. Department of Energy State Energy Program to Illinois. The Notice of Funding Opportunity and additional information can be found on Illinois EPA's Office of Energy webpage Energy webpage. Applications for the Efficient and Resilient Public Building Grant will be accepted through September 30, 2026. Applicants must apply through the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act Grantee Portal.

Advancing Innovative Manufacturing (AIM) Tax Credit

The Advancing Innovative Manufacturing Illinois Tax Credit (AIM) is a new tax incentive program designed to accelerate manufacturing projects that integrate cutting-edge technologies into their processes. Established in 2025, AIM is designed to strengthen business growth and investment across the state's top industry sectors. The program supports projects that utilize advanced manufacturing and involve substantial qualified capital improvements. The application is now open for this program and can be found here.

For more information about the AIM program, contact your DCEO Team RED member and/or use this link.

Federal Grant Support Program – Round 2

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's (DCEO)'s Federal Grant Support Program Round 2 is open and will make resources available to Illinois-based proposals seeking competitive federal grants. This match program will encourage more applicants to apply for federal grant opportunities, provide critical assistance to meet the minimum match eligibility requirements, increase the competitiveness of applications, and provide the State of Illinois with an opportunity to make a firm commitment and demonstration of support for projects that are well aligned with the State's economic development goals and priorities. For more information about the program, including links to the NOFO and application, visit this link.

CDBG Community Revitalization Program

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's new Community Revitalization grant program administered in the Office of Community Development and funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant is now open. **Applications will be considered on a rolling basis.**

This anxiously awaited program will make funding available to rural areas throughout the state for sidewalk improvements/streetscapes, rehabilitation of publicly owned commercial/industrial buildings, historic preservation of non-residential buildings, renovation or conversion to another purpose of a closed building, and non-residential demolition of publicly owned property. Rural communities have long suffered a variety of unmet needs with no funding to address the challenges.

The Community Revitalization Program will allow projects like demolition of a former nursing home next to a hospital, allowing for a health and fitness park; renovation of a historic, former train station into a community center; creation of a downtown streetscape to make it ADA friendly; conversion of a closed school into affordable apartments; or façade improvements to arrest deterioration of historic buildings.

The demolition activity of Community Revitalization is also available to urban areas to assist with long-term neglect and abandonment of properties. **Demolition projects must create open space and cannot be redeveloped for a minimum of five years.** The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) can be accessed at this link. Recordings, application workshops and technical assistance sessions can be accessed at this link.

Economic Empowerment Center (EEC) Round 2

The EEC Grant Program was developed to help create an inclusive business ecosystem within communities that have historically faced systemic barriers to entry and growth through dynamic partnerships, targeted outreach, and tailored programs and initiatives. DCEO has previously awarded $2.5 million in grant funding to 10 recipients through the EEC Grant Program.

Eligible Applicants

• Career education agencies; and

• Non-profit organizations, including but not limited to: local development corporations, chambers of commerce, community-based outreach centers, and community-based organizations that provide services to underserved businesses and entrepreneurs.

Award Range: $250,000-$500,000

Deadline: Rolling until funding is exhausted. DCEO hosted an Application Workshop and Technical Assistance webinar for EEC grant applicants and the webinar was recorded, and the recording will be available on the DCEO website.

How to Apply?

Economic Empowerment Center Program Application

• Supporting documents below:

- An electronic/digital photo of the project location and copy of the CDFI Map Area, if applicable
- Mission Statement
- Articles of Incorporation
- Copies of Organizational Chart, and more

Illinois EPA Lead Service Line Inventory Grant

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has announced $6.57 million to assist communities across the state in meeting the inventory requirements of the Lead Service Line Replacement and Notification Act (LSLRNA). More information can be found at this link. Please note this grant program is for lead service line inventorying purposes only, and lead service line replacement costs are ineligible for this grant program.

CEJA Capacity Grant Program Is Now LIVE!

The Workforce Policy Lab, in collaboration with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), is excited to introduce the CEJA Capacity Grant Program—a bold new initiative to strengthen a more inclusive and resilient clean energy future for Illinois. Launching in 2026, this program will provide current and prospective DCEO CEJA grantees and sub-grantees with robust capacity-building support, along with grant awards starting at $100,000. This direct investment will empower 501(c)(3) organizations across the state to scale clean energy workforce development, expand contractor opportunities, and drive equitable economic growth in communities statewide.

The **CEJA Capacity Grant Program** Information Session recording, transcript, and slide deck have now been posted at this link. As you begin your application, please keep in mind that we offer several resources to help ensure your application is as successful as possible. These resources are on the program landing page under "Technical Assistance & Resources." We will also host two Technical Assistance Office Hours for applicants seeking clarification or application assistance.

Illinois EPA Unsewered Communities Planning Grants

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Acting Director James Jennings announced a new funding opportunity to assist communities where there are currently no wastewater collection and/or treatment facilities. Illinois EPA is making $1 million available for grants through the Unsewered Communities Planning Grant Program, which will assist small and disadvantaged communities in developing a project plan that identifies a solution to wastewater collection and treatment needs. A Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) has been posted to the Illinois EPA website.

The Unsewered Communities Planning Grant Program (UCPGP) provides grant funding to develop a plan that will address problems associated with the collection and treatment of wastewater in an unsewered community. Ultimately, this information can be used in an application for a project that would be funded by the Illinois Unsewered Communities Construction Grant Program. Funding for the UCPGP is made possible by utilizing a portion of Illinois EPA's Water Pollution Control Loan Program Loan Support funds generated from loan repayments. Applicants that qualify can receive funding up to $30,000, and Illinois EPA expects to fund up to 50 grants.

All required forms and information are available on the Illinois EPA's UCPGP webpage. **The application period will remain open until all funding has been expended.** Applications will be reviewed for eligibility and completeness and awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis. Applicants must be pre-qualified through the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal.

Office Resources

Grants Page on My Website
How to Best Find Information
Key Federal Funding Sources
Related Federal Sources
Private and Corporate Funding
Requesting Grants Assistance
Requesting Letters of Support