

THE OPPORTUNITY PROJECT

2022 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Helping Communities Access Infrastructure Grant Funding

White House Office of Science & Technology Policy (OSTP)

THE CHALLENGE – Create digital tools that use open data to help state, local, tribal, and territorial governments navigate potential grant opportunities enabled by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and other major initiatives to optimize the use of their limited staff resources and enable them to better plan for upcoming opportunities.

EXECUTIVE CHAMPIONS –

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THE PROBLEM – The Federal Government awards over [\\$1.5 trillion](#) in Federal contracts and financial assistance each year—and sometimes much more in times of crisis. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), enacted in November 2021, represents a once-in-a-generation investment in our nation’s infrastructure and competitiveness with [\\$1.2 trillion in appropriations funding for over 375 programs](#), many of which are competitive grant programs that jurisdictions must apply for.

Unfortunately, many historic barriers exist to accessing financial assistance, especially for lower-resourced communities, including difficulties in obtaining information about when grant opportunities become available. The short application window of some grant opportunities, and requirements like the need to provide matching funds or limits imposed on indirect costs, can also make the decision to apply for specific grants challenging.

Many jurisdictions have expressed that they lack the capacity to navigate through the mountain of information on programs funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and other major initiatives in a relatively short time period. This makes it difficult to find the programs most relevant to their locality, and lower-resourced communities in particular lack the technical assistance needed to develop quality grant applications that have a higher chance of being selected. This reinforces existing inequities as higher-resourced communities are more successful in accessing these grant opportunities while lower-resourced communities are left behind.

THE OPPORTUNITY – Tech tools that customize the delivery of relevant program opportunities to lower-resourced community leaders and help them prepare and plan for upcoming application deadlines and referrals for technical assistance could help mitigate many of these barriers.

VISION FOR SPRINT OUTCOMES – Through access to user-friendly digital tools and information, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments of all capacities will be more aware of and better prepared to access federal grant funding from the BIL, helping to ensure public dollars work to reduce existing inequities.

TARGET END USERS – Lower-resourced state, local, tribal, and territorial governments seeking competitive Federal grant funding. Specific examples of offices/users include mayoral offices, community leaders, tribal leaders, county administrators, and state agency representatives.

RELATED DATA SETS – Tech teams could leverage the existing public [Guide Book on Build.gov](#), public program listings, Notices of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) on Grants.gov and other Federal grant portals, and other data sets for use in their tool. These as well as other data sets are listed below.

- ↳ [Build.gov](#)
- ↳ [USASpending.gov](#)
- ↳ [Performance.gov](#)
 - [Agency Strategic Plans](#)
 - Performance Plans and Reports
- ↳ [SAM.Gov](#)
- ↳ [Grants.gov](#)
- ↳ [Census data](#)
 - [Computer and Internet Use](#)
 - [Emergency Management data sets](#)

SPRINT LEADERS

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