

**FY26 Congressionally Directed Spending Request Agriculture, Rural  
Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies  
Subcommittee Guidance  
Office of Senator Jeanne Shaheen**

*The information below reflects the updated guidance received from the Senate Appropriations Committee for fiscal year (FY) 2026 with respect to congressionally directed spending (CDS) requests. Should you have any questions, please contact Senator Shaheen's office at [appropriations\\_shaheen@shaheen.senate.gov](mailto:appropriations_shaheen@shaheen.senate.gov) or call 202-224-2841.*

**Guidance on Submitting Requests for Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS)**

The Ag Subcommittee will accept CDS requests for the following accounts:

- **Agricultural Research Service, Building and Facilities (ARS B&F)**
- **National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Research and Facilities Act Program (NIFA RFAP)**
- **Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Salaries and Expenses (APHIS S&E)**
- **Natural Resources Conservation Service, Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (WFPO)**
- **Rural Development, Community Facilities Grants**
- **Rural Development, Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grants**

Following enactment of the FY26 funding bill, CDS recipients must apply for funding through the normal agency application process. The Subcommittee will not fund CDS items if a recipient CANNOT meet all program requirements.

**Agricultural Research Service, Buildings and Facilities:**

Requests for ARS B&F may only include funding for existing facilities or facilities where funding has been provided in the past. Facilities must be ARS-owned.

**National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Research and Facilities Act Program**

Eligible qualifying institutions (Land Grant Universities, Non-Land-Grant Colleges of Agriculture, and other eligible entities as defined in section [7 U.S.C. 6971\(f\)\(1\)\(C\)](#)) may request funds for constructing, purchasing, updating, renovating, or modifying agricultural research buildings to conduct research in the areas of agriculture and food sciences. Funds may be used to fund site design, purchase and installation of permanently affixed equipment for research, as well as for construction or renovation of buildings or sites for agricultural research facilities or other facilities that store agricultural research experimental samples.

**CDS recipients must provide a 100% non-federal match for any RFAP award.**

Recipients cannot move forward without a commitment to match funding before obligation. Not more than 3 percent of the CDS funding shall be available to pay for administrative costs. Construction projects are subject National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review, and must comply with Build America Buy America requirements. Learn more about RFAP [here](#).

### **APHIS Salaries and Expenses:**

Requests for APHIS S&E must align with APHIS' mission and must meet environmental review requirements (i.e. NEPA and ESA). Learn more about APHIS' programs [here](#). The period of availability for APHIS CDS will be one-year funding (i.e. until the end of the fiscal year).

### **WFPO:**

CDS recipients for WFPO must have a local sponsor. Eligible local sponsors can be any State, political subdivision, soil or water conservation district, flood prevention or control district, or combinations thereof; any irrigation or reservoir company or water users' association; or any Indian tribe or tribal organization.

Any individual project may not exceed a watershed or sub-watershed size of 250,000 acres. At least 20 percent of the project's benefits must be directly related to agriculture.

Projects are required to complete a four-step process including:

1. Preliminary feasibility study (PIFR)
2. Watershed Plan development
3. Implementation of Watershed Plan
4. Commencement of construction for authorized watershed conservation

If a project is a "new start" it is eligible only for PIFR funding at a level of \$55,000. Funding cannot be requested for stages 2-4 until the PIFR is completed (this includes projects where the PIFR is in progress). Offices are encouraged to request funding for projects that are nearing the construction stage.

Requests must include the following information in Legi-Mate:

- Local sponsor
- Confirm coordination with the Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist
- Indicate for which phase of the project funding is requested

### **Community Facilities Grants:**

The following project and applicant eligibility criteria must be met **prior to** a congressionally directed spending request being approved:

The Community Facilities (CF) Grant program has a match requirement on a sliding scale based on the community population size of where the project will be located. CF Grants can cover up to 75 percent of the total project costs. Rural Development (RD) verifies an applicant's population size from the most recent census. **In order to determine whether a project is eligible, your office or the applicant is required to reach out to your state RD office.** Contact information for the state offices can be found at this link: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/about-rd/state-offices>.

This program will fund **up to** 75% of total project costs, with match requirements based on population as follows:

- Maximum of **75 percent** when the proposed project is located in a rural community having a population of **5,000** or fewer;
- Maximum of **55 percent** when the proposed project is located in a rural community having a population of **12,000** or fewer;
- Maximum of **35 percent** when the proposed project is located in a rural community having a population of **20,000** or fewer.

Towns with populations over 20,000 are not eligible for this program.

In general, CF matching funds must come from a non-Federal source (must be a cash match; it cannot be in-kind). However, there are two exceptions: (1) sometimes a Federal source will state that it can be used as a match for Federal Grants and (2) when a Federal source loses its Federal identity -- such as CDBG funds that are distributed through a Governor's office (not the CDBG entitlement funding) -- a CF project having these funds as a part of the capital stack can be a part of the applicant required contribution. While an applicant does not need to have its match in hand at the time of submission, they must have their match at the time of obligation. If applicants fail to have their match within three years of enactment of the final bill, funds may be swept back into the general CF account.

The average CF CDS project size funded in FY24 was \$1,000,000.

Funds may not be used for the following activities:

- To reimburse funds for projects already constructed/acquired or projects that will be completed by the passage of the final bill;
- To pay initial operating expenses or annual recurring costs, including purchases or rentals that are generally considered to be operating and maintenance expenses (unless a CF loan is part of the funding package);
- To fund facilities to be used primarily for recreation purposes; and
- To fund facilities to be used primarily for business entrepreneur purposes.

This program is subject to the Build America Buy America Act (BABAA) requirements which will apply to the total project cost, not just the Federal cost-share portion. Applicants must also meet environmental review requirements (i.e., NEPA). Applicants must complete an application if awarded a CDS in the final bill.

Note: there are several set-asides within the CF grant program, but CDS requests will only be eligible for the general CF Grant program

**Due to the complexity of these grants, all applications should be vetted through your state RD office – the Subcommittee will not consider projects that are ineligible.**

RD publishes its grant awards for all its programs on their website: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/about-rd/grant-awards>. Once you download the excel spreadsheet, you can filter for just CF Grants.

**Rural Development, Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grants:**

The following project and applicant eligibility criteria must be met **prior to** a congressionally

directed spending request being approved:

- There is a flat 15 percent match (matching funds cannot come from another Federal source).
- Full list of eligible entities, uses, and limitations can be found here: [7 CFR Part 1734 Subpart A and B](#).
- The maximum grant size is \$1,000,000.
- Reminder, even though for-profit entities are eligible for this program, they are not eligible for congressionally directed spending requests.
- **Broadband deployment is not an eligible use of funds for DLT.**
- Applicants must complete an application with RD if awarded a CDS in the final bill.

For both CF and DLT Grants, state directors and local specialists are available to answer specific questions regarding eligibility of a proposed project. You can find their contact information at this link: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/about-rd/state-offices>.