COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES
Fiscal Year 2025 Member Project Request Guidance

Programmatic and language requests are due by 6:00 pm on Wednesday, May 1, 2024
CPF submission deadline is 6:00 pm on Friday, May 3, 2024
Members must post CPF requests on their websites on Friday, May 17, 2024

This document provides guidance on submitting Community Project Funding, programmatic, and language requests for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025. All Community Project Funding requests must adhere to the eligibility requirements outlined in this guidance document to be considered for FY 2025 funding. Please review this guidance in its entirety prior to submitting all Member requests.

If you encounter general problems with the database or have technical questions, please email the Committee’s IT office at Approp.ITMemberRequest@mail.house.gov. For questions regarding this guidance, please email the Interior Subcommittee staff at IN.MemberRequests@mail.house.gov.

General Guidance

Offices must use the House Appropriations Committee’s database for all Community Project Funding, programmatic, and language requests. Please ensure that all field entries are complete and accurate. No printed materials will be accepted. Each office is responsible only for their requests and cannot submit requests on behalf of another office.

Member Request Letters

Offices must upload a single, signed Member letter addressed to Interior Chairman Mike Simpson and Ranking Member Chellie Pingree that includes all Community Project Funding, programmatic, and language requests for the FY 2025 Interior Appropriations bill ranked in priority order.

Member letters should provide enough information to clearly identify each request entered in the database, but all other pertinent details should be included with the online submission. Members’ letters must include a priority ranking of CPF, program, and language requests in the Interior bill consistent with the priority ranking you entered in the database. In addition, the database allows Members to separately rank their top 1-10 requests, across all subcommittees, as well as their CPF requests across all subcommittees. The Committee strongly encourages Members to make those rankings as well.

Please note that requests entered into the database must match the signed Member letter. If a Member signs a multi-Member or delegation request letter, that request must be entered into the
online database for each signee and be included in the Member’s signed letter to be considered. This requirement applies to Community Project Funding, programmatic, and language requests.

**Financial Disclosure Certifications and Federal Nexus Statements – Community Project Funding Requests:**

Members must certify that they and their “immediate family” (defined as father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, husband, wife, father-in-law, or mother-in-law) do not have a financial interest in the requested project. Members also must include a statement regarding the project’s Federal nexus. Letter templates are included in this guidance document.

**TEMPLATE FOR MEMBER FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE CERTIFICATIONS AND FEDERAL NEXUS STATEMENTS**

To comply with House rule XXIII, clause 17, and Committee guidance, below is suggested text for a statement of Federal nexus and a financial disclosure certification to accompany each Community Project Funding request:

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

“I am requesting funding for ____________[project] in fiscal year 2025. The entity to receive funding for this project is __________________________, located at __________________________ (address including street name, city, state, and zip code). The funding would be used for ___________________. The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because ____________________.

The project has a Federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by Title VI of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C 1381 et seq. [Clean Water Projects] OR Section 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act, 42 U.S.C. 300j-12. [Drinking Water Projects].

I certify that I have no financial interest in this project, and neither does anyone in my immediate family.”

Sincerely,

Member of Congress

These statements must be on letterhead and must be signed by the Member. Members must post these letters for Interior Community Project Funding requests publicly on their websites on Friday, May 17, 2024, following the end of the Committee’s two-week technical assistance review period. Please prepare the certification on letterhead and upload a PDF of the signed document to the request database.
Public Posting of Certification/Federal Nexus Letters – Community Project Funding Requests:

For transparency, Member offices must post each financial disclosure certification and Federal nexus letter publicly on their website for all Community Project Funding requests on **Friday, May 17, 2024**. The posted information must also include: (1) the name and address of the proposed recipient; (2) the amount requested; and (3) a description of the request to include the purpose of the funding and justification for use of taxpayer funds.

Members must provide the Committee with a link to the Member’s webpage containing this information when they enter the request into the Members’ Request database system. The Committee will include links from all Members submitting Community Project Funding requests in a single location on its website to use as a “one-stop” online database.

Community Support Letters – Community Project Funding Requests:

Community engagement and support is crucial in determining which projects are worthy of Federal funding. Only projects with demonstrated community support will be considered. To demonstrate evidence of community support, Members must also submit community support letters into the database as part of their requests. Members may submit the following:

- Letters of support from elected community leaders (e.g., mayors or other officials) or newspaper editorial boards;
- Press articles highlighting the need for the requested Community Project Funding projects;
- Projects listed on State intended use plans, community development plans, or other publicly available planning documents; or
- Resolutions passed by city councils or boards.

**General Submission Checklist**

- Did you upload a single, **signed** Member letter on official letterhead addressed to Interior Chair Simpson and Ranking Member Pingree **detailing the request(s)**?
- Did you upload **signed** Member financial disclosure certifications and Federal nexus statements for each Community Project Funding request on official letterhead addressed to Full Committee Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro?
- Have you validated that the information in the Member request letter and financial disclosure letter matches the information you entered in the database?
- Do you plan to publicly post information for all Community Project Funding requests to the Member’s website on **Friday, May 17, 2024**?
Community Project Funding

Environmental Protection Agency – State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG)

For FY 2025, the Interior Subcommittee will accept Community Project Funding requests in the Environmental Protection Agency – State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG) account for certain clean water and drinking water infrastructure projects. The Subcommittee will not accept project requests in any other account.

These projects include construction of and modifications to municipal sewage treatment plants and drinking water treatment plants. Similar to past practice, the Committee will be limiting STAG infrastructure grants only to projects that are publicly owned or owned by a non-profit entity and that are otherwise eligible for the funding from that state’s Clean Water or Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRF) loan programs.

When submitting EPA STAG Community Project Funding requests, please be aware of the following guidance:

- **Ban on for-profit recipients and privately-owned projects.** The Committee will not fund projects to for-profit entities and privately-owned projects are NOT eligible for infrastructure grants, even if they are otherwise eligible for assistance under a SRF program. Additionally, the Committee will not fund projects for resorts, golf courses, gardens, or similar projects.

- **State, municipal, local, territorial, or Tribal governmental entities as grantees.** Public entities should be considered as the primary grantees to oversee the completion of the project. For STAG water infrastructure projects, States have Intended Use Plans (IUPs) with drinking water and wastewater projects that have already been vetted by governmental officials.

- **Non-profits as grantees.** Non-profits will be considered on a limited basis at the discretion of the Chairman. If a Member requests that funding be directed to a non-profit organization, the Member must provide evidence that the recipient is a non-profit organization as described under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. Many water projects often partner with non-profit entities to complete projects. Therefore, the Chairman will consider, on a limited basis, projects that are directed to non-profits with an inherently governmental function.

- **Federal Nexus.** The Committee will only fund projects with purposes authorized by Federal law and that can meet all underlying Federal requirements:
  - Clean water/wastewater projects: Title VI of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.
• **Matching requirements.** There is a minimum 20% cost share requirement for any portion of a project funded through a STAG infrastructure grant and the Committee will not waive matching requirements:
  
  o For example, a $1 million project could receive a maximum of $800,000 from the Federal government, with the remaining $200,000 the responsibility of the grantee.
  
  o In *almost* all cases, other Federal funds cannot be used to meet this 20% cost share. However, assistance provided by a SRF does count towards the project’s matching requirement.
  
  o It is important that Member offices discuss with their State and local officials the ability for localities to meet matching requirements prior to requesting a project. This does not mean that matching funds must be in-hand prior to requesting a project, but that local officials must have a plan to meet such requirements for such a project to be viable.

• **One-year funding:** Each project request must be for FY 2025 funds only and cannot include a request for multiyear funding.

• **Project Amounts.** Members should use the range of project amounts funded in FY 2024 as a general guide when making requests. In FY 2024, most EPA STAG infrastructure projects funded in the House bill ranged from $100,000 - $5,000,000. Note that the Committee may consider higher project amounts for fiscal year 2025, and any caps will be determined by the Chairman after reviewing the full universe of requests.

• **Contact information.** It is very important to include accurate contact information for the prospective grantee when filling out the online request. This includes a point of contact, phone number, email information, and address. The grantee name entered into the online database must match the grantee name on the signed disclosure of financial interest certification letter.

• **Eligibility Questions.** Member offices must answer all the eligibility questions in the database for a request to be considered including the below supplemental questions:
  
  o Is this a Clean Water SRF project or a Drinking Water SRF project?
  
  o Is the project on your State’s most recently finalized Clean Water/Drinking Water SRF Intended Use Plan (IUP)?
  
  o Has the project received Federal funds previously? If so, please describe.
  
  o Does the project have (or expects to have within 12 months) its 20% cost share requirement?
  
  o Given the Federal nexus requirement, does the project help meet or maintain Clean Water Act/Safe Drinking Water Act standards? If so, please describe.
STAG projects have very specific eligibility requirements, and the Committee will not consider projects that do not meet those requirements. The following lists some of the project types that are ineligible for STAG funding:

**Projects that are NOT generally eligible for STAG Grants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clean Water / Wastewater</th>
<th>Drinking Water</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Land</strong>, except for projects described in the subsequent table under eligibility #11.</td>
<td>1. <strong>Dams or rehabilitation of dams.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Operations and maintenance costs.</strong></td>
<td>2. <strong>Operations and maintenance costs.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Non-municipal point source control.</strong></td>
<td>3. <strong>Water rights</strong>, except if the water rights are owned by a system that is being purchased through consolidation as part of a capacity development strategy or if the water rights purchase is covered by EPA’s DWSRF Class Deviation for Water Rights 2019.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <strong>Acid rain drainage correction.</strong></td>
<td>4. <strong>Reservoirs</strong>, except for finished water reservoirs and those reservoirs that are part of the treatment process and are located on the property where the treatment facility is located.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Ambient water quality monitoring.</strong></td>
<td>5. <strong>Laboratory fees for monitoring.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <strong>Flood Control Projects</strong>, unless the project is otherwise managing, reducing, treating, or recapturing stormwater.</td>
<td>6. <strong>Projects needed mainly for fire protection.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. <strong>Privately owned sewer pipes.</strong></td>
<td>7. Projects for systems that lack adequate technical, managerial, and financial capability, unless assistance will ensure compliance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Projects for systems in significant non-compliance, unless funding will ensure compliance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following list provides some examples of the types of projects that are eligible for STAG grant funding, and which are most frequently funded:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Projects that <strong>ARE generally eligible</strong> for STAG Grants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clean Water / Wastewater</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Wastewater treatment plants, including sludge handling facilities:</strong> Upgraded (increase in treatment level) or expanded (increase in treatment capacity) facilities, including biological facilities, mechanical, a lagoon system, a land treatment system, or individual on-site systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Collector Sewers:</strong> Small sewers that convey wastewater from residences, commercial establishments, and industrial sites to larger interceptor sewers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Interceptor Sewers:</strong> Large sewers that convey wastewater from collector sewers directly to a wastewater treatment facility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Sewer Pipes:</strong> Rehabilitation is eligible only if pipes are publicly owned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Outfall Sewer:</strong> A sewer that conveys treated wastewater from a wastewater treatment facility to the receiving waters (i.e., a river, stream, lake, ocean, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Storm Water Management:</strong> Measures to manage, reduce, treat, or recapture stormwater or subsurface drainage water (i.e., storm sewers, green infrastructure, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7. Combined sewer overflow (CSO) control and sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) control:</strong> Combined sewers are sewers that convey both wastewater and storm water and may overflow during periods of heavy rain. The costs to correct CSO and SSO overflow problems are eligible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For additional eligibility information, please consult:

- EPA’s Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Eligibility Handbook
- EPA’s Overview of Clean Water State Revolving Fund Eligibilities

Programmatic and Language Requests

For non-Community Project Funding requests (i.e., programmatic and language requests), insert the appropriate information in each text field in the online database. If the character limit of a text field prevents the user from entering in all the proposed text, please insert a summary that describes the purpose and effect of the proposed language and upload a document containing the full text. **Do not insert “refer to attachment” or anything similar without also inserting a summary directly into the text field.**

If the programmatic, bill, or report language request is for a specific non-governmental entity and not competitively awarded, or narrowly defines a competitive grant to the extent that only one entity or geographic area can apply, the request may be a Community Project Funding request. Please refer to the Community Project Funding guidance in this document or email the Interior Subcommittee staff at IN.MemberRequests@mail.house.gov if you have questions regarding the proper categorization of a request.

- **Programmatic Request:** A request to fund a specific program or activity in the Interior bill at a specified level—Example: *Provide $100,000,000 within the National Park Service - Operation of the National Park System account for Park Support.*

- **Language Request:** A request to include specific Interior bill or report language that does not direct funding to a particular entity but *encourages*, *urges*, or *directs* some type of action by an agency funded in the Interior bill. Example: “*The Committee directs the National Park Service to fully account for park needs across the country when including funding in future budget submissions for Park Support.*”