

FY2026 Water Resources Research Act Section 104(g) National Competitive Grants Notice of Funding Opportunity

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) has released the FY2026 Water Resources Research Act Section 104(g) National Competitive Grants Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). I encourage researchers with relevant expertise to review this opportunity and consider developing a proposal.

This year's 104(g) General competition has a particularly focused research priority:

- improving the observation, estimation, validation, and forecasting of water use by data centers and other water-intensive industries that rely on public water supply systems.

The NOFO specifically calls for approaches that integrate multiple data sources, including utility records, operational data, environmental conditions, and publicly reported information, and identifies the application of artificial intelligence and machine learning as a central requirement for improving data transparency, traceability, and characterization of uncertainty.

A few important details:

- **Funding:** Approximately \$462,500 is anticipated to be available nationally, with approximately four awards and a maximum federal request of \$120,000 per award.
- **Matching requirement:** Proposals require a 1:1 non-federal match. The match can include eligible non-federal salary, benefits, and indirect costs. Federal funds cannot be used for indirect costs.
- **Period of performance:** USGS anticipates projects beginning May 1, 2027, with an anticipated end date of April 30, 2030.
- **Proposal format:** Core proposal elements 3–8 are limited to 10 single-spaced pages, using 12-point font and at least 1-inch margins. Proposals exceeding this limit will not be considered.
- **USGS collaboration:** A letter of support from USGS is required, whether or not a USGS scientist is included as a co-PI. Proposals are also evaluated on how the work complements or advances USGS science.
- **Data management:** A Data Management Plan is required, including provisions for data standards, access, reuse, and archiving. Proposals creating geospatial products must also document that the proposed product does not already exist through a GeoPlatform.gov search.
- **Budget preparation:** Please use the required 104(g) budget workbook and budget justification template. Both federal and matching costs must be fully

detailed. Based on our past experience, insufficiently documented costs will delay or prevent an award. If UAS are proposed, please also review the DOI restrictions included in the application materials.

Important KWI submission deadline: Although the USGS NOFO lists a **November 12, 2026, 5:00 p.m. Eastern** deadline, individual investigators cannot submit directly to USGS. Applications must be submitted through the designated State Water Resources Research Institute. Therefore, **all Kansas proposals must be routed through the Kansas Water Institute, and KWI must receive the complete proposal package no later than November 5, 2026.**

Follow this link to the NOFO and supporting application materials:

<https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/364012>

Please reach out to KWI if you are considering a submission. We would appreciate hearing from prospective applicants **as early as possible** so we can assist with the required routing, budget and match documentation, USGS coordination, and final submission.

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