

FY 2027 Appropriations Requests for Social & Behavioral Science Research

The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) urges Congress to appropriate the amounts below for federal research agencies in fiscal year (FY) 2027. The following pages discuss the critical activities of these agencies and the role they play in supporting social and behavioral science research.

Agency	COSSA's FY 2027 Request
National Institutes of Health (NIH)	\$51.303 billion
National Science Foundation (NSF)	\$9.9 billion
Census Bureau	\$2.1 billion
Institute of Education Sciences (IES)	\$900 million
Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)	\$754 million
Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality (AHRQ)	\$500 million
Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)	\$300 million
National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)	\$220 million
International Education & Foreign Language Studies	\$85.7 million
Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)	\$48 million
National Institute of Justice (NIJ)	\$42 million

FY 2027 Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Bill

National Science Foundation

At least \$9.9 billion

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is the only U.S. federal agency tasked with supporting scientific research across all fields of science and serves as the largest single funder of basic social and behavioral science research in the U.S. Investment in social and behavioral science research at NSF helps us answer questions like: why some people in the path of a hurricane fail to heed warnings, or how to advance technology, like artificial intelligence, so that it is people-centric and ethically developed. In fact, nearly every significant challenge facing the United States today—from alleviating unemployment to understanding the drivers of terrorism—requires understanding the motivations and consequences of people's behavior. In addition, through its STEM

Education Directorate, NSF helps foster the scientific workforce of the future and gives educators tools to enhance STEM education at all levels.

We understand NSF is currently going through a restructuring, including within its research directorates and with respect to its programs. As the agency evolves and increases its footprint in high-tech areas like artificial intelligence and quantum computing, we call on Congress to maintain its longstanding, bipartisan support for the agency and urge you to reinforce NSF's foundational role as *the funder of basic research*. Robust funding for NSF can allow the agency to invest in emerging areas while maintaining support for basic science exploration.

Census Bureau

\$2.1 billion

Social scientists—along with businesses and policy makers at federal, state, and local levels—

rely on the Census Bureau for accurate, timely, objective, and relevant data to better understand the U.S. population and to produce findings that help shape policies to better serve the American people. Fiscal year 2027 is a crucial year for 2030 decennial preparations as the agency will be analyzing data collected from the 2026 Census Test and preparing for the 2028 Dress Rehearsal. These tests are important components of the decennial planning cycle as they are used to evaluate new enumeration and data collection strategies and the latest technologies. Adequate support for preparations in the years leading up to the decennial census help manage later costs.

National Institute of Justice

At least \$42 million

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) within the Department of Justice provides funding for research, development, and evaluation projects at institutions across the country to shed light on the most pressing issues facing our nation's criminal justice system. This includes drivers of domestic radicalization, addressing the drug epidemic, reducing violent crime, improving school safety, and fostering positive relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve. Despite the nation's growing need for objective, science-backed solutions, NIJ's budget has been declining for more than a decade and was hit hard in the final FY 2026 appropriation. Funding shortfalls limit NIJ's ability to disseminate critical findings to law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders who need the most up-to-date information to improve policies and practices that promote public safety and equitable access to justice. An appropriation of at least \$42 million in FY 2027 is needed to restore NIJ's budget back to its FY 2018 level and allow the agency to support cutting-edge research that can have real-world impact.

Bureau of Justice Statistics

At least \$48 million

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is the nation's primary source of crime and justice data, producing statistical evidence needed by

researchers and criminal justice decisionmakers alike. Despite growing demand from policymakers, researchers, and other stakeholders for high-quality criminal justice data across an expanding array of variables, BJS has faced significant budgetary challenges over the past decade. Steady declines in funding have resulted in antiquated systems and staffing shortfalls, which can only be resolved through sustained investment. For example, the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)—the nation's primary source of information on criminal victimization and the only federal estimate of crime not reported to law enforcement—has been forced to reduce its sample size in recent years. It has become increasingly challenging for BJS to support a robust NCVS without significantly compromising other BJS activities. Increased funding would allow BJS to modernize data collection and dissemination systems, hire necessary experts, and begin to develop the next generation of statistical products to keep pace with the ever-changing criminal justice landscape and fill critical knowledge gaps.

FY 2027 Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Bill

National Institutes of Health

\$51.303 billion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is renowned for supporting cutting-edge biomedical research that often translates to cures and advanced treatments. But did you know NIH also supports basic and applied social and behavioral science research across its 27 institutes and centers? Understanding behavioral influences on health is critical in battling the leading causes of morbidity and mortality in the U.S., including obesity, heart disease, cancer, HIV/AIDS, diabetes, age-related illnesses, accidents, substance abuse, and mental illness.

NIH's Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR), housed within the Office of the NIH Director, coordinates basic, clinical, and translational research in the behavioral, social, and economic sciences in support of the NIH mission.

In addition, the office co-funds highly rated grants in the behavioral and social sciences in partnership with individual institutes and centers. Despite its expansive mission, the OBSSR budget, which is set by the NIH Director, has not kept pace with the overall growth of the NIH. We urge Congress to emphasize support for OBSSR and direct the NIH to finally support funding for the office at levels commensurate with the need for understanding the behavioral and social influences on health.

Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality
At least \$500 million

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) is the only agency in the federal government with the explicit mission to fund research on improving health care at the provider level (i.e., in hospitals, medical practices, nursing homes, and other medical facilities). Its work improves the quality, safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of America's health care system and provides a necessary complement to the work of health research agencies. To deliver better outcomes, we need to be able to differentiate which healthcare interventions work, for whom, and how to implement them. AHRQ's focus on the real-world application of scientific research in clinical settings is essential for ensuring safe and quality healthcare for the American public. We call on Congress to reject any proposals to cut funding to the agency or otherwise undermine its ability to continue this critical work.

National Center for Health Statistics
\$220 million

Housed within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) collects data on all aspects of our health care system through data cooperatives and surveys that serve as the gold standard for data collection around the world. With the requested funding, NCHS would be able to modernize and diversify its data collection efforts and deliver timely, meaningful information to policymakers, public health officials, providers, patients, and scientists who rely on NCHS data while also

strengthening the agency's ability to provide unbiased, current health data to policymakers.

Institute of Education Sciences
At least \$900 million

Housed within the Department of Education, the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) provides the nation with important statistics, research, and evaluation that improve education policy and practice and help us understand trends in student populations, schools, and higher education institutions. With increasing demand for evidence-based practices in education, adequate funding for IES is necessary to support research and data collection that increases our understanding of the factors that influence teaching and learning and apply those findings to improve educational outcomes through the development of evidence-based resources.

Unfortunately, the Department of Education has seen its workforce decimated since March 2025 and, more recently, has been directed to pursue inter-agency agreements that will ultimately reduce the Department's responsibilities. We remain concerned that a significant amount of FY 2025 appropriated funds remains unspent in the face of contract cancellations that have affected peer review, data collection and reporting, and the development of evidence-based materials used by educators, school districts, and state policymakers. We are also concerned that funding appropriated for FY 2026 will not be spent in the manner intended by Congress. This could lead to additional delays—or cancellation—of programs that fund essential research. In particular, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which provides data on the state of education in the U.S. and is housed within IES, lost nearly its entire workforce over the last year, which has led to the reduction in quantity of data collected and reported.

We call on Congress to reject efforts aimed at decimating education research and data collection, and urge continued robust funding in FY

2027 and oversight of how FY 2025 and FY 2026 funds are obligated and spent.

International Education and Foreign Language Studies

\$85.7 million

COSSA urges Congress to appropriate \$75.5 million to the Department of Education's Title VI program and \$10.3 million to the Fulbright-Hays program. These programs nurture cadres of college graduates with the cultural and language proficiencies needed to serve in government and the foreign service, including at the Department of Defense, Department of State, and federal intelligence agencies. With the rise of national security risks and global competitiveness, these programs support the development of a workforce equipped with the skills needed to address important international challenges.

Bureau of Labor Statistics

\$754 million

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) within the Department of Labor produces economic data essential for evidence-based decision-making by businesses and financial markets, federal, state, and local government officials, and households faced with spending and career choices. BLS must modernize to produce the gold standard data on jobs, wages, skill needs, inflation, productivity and more that our businesses, researchers, and policymakers heavily rely on. The requested funding level would allow BLS to continue to support evidence-based policymaking, smart program evaluation, and confident business investment. Unfortunately, the work of BLS has been unnecessarily politicized and subjected to unwarranted accusations of falsifying data. We urge Congress to defend federal statistical agencies and taxpayer-supported data sources from political interference, protecting the objectivity and reliability of America's data enterprise.

Institute of Museum and Library Services

\$300 million

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) supports our nation's 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums by providing resources that allow them to invest in innovation, lifelong learning, and cultural and civic engagement. The social science research community is grateful for Congress' support for IMLS in the final FY 2026 appropriations bill, especially considering Administration efforts to shutter the agency.

The Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), passed in 2018, authorized \$232 million for LSTA grants that provide states with resources for a wide range of essential library services unique to the needs of their residents. COSSA urges Congress to appropriate the authorized level for LSTA grants in FY 2027.

The Office of Museum Services (OMS) awards grants that support museums in their efforts to educate students and preserve and digitize collections, ensuring more equitable access to information resources for generations to come.

Contact COSSA (kshelstad@cosssa.org) with any questions or for additional details.