

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

# Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

February 2024

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# Meeting Overview

## Agenda:

1. Meeting Overview
2. Overview of Research and Learning Priorities
3. SLFRF Program Background
4. SLFRF Learning Areas
5. SLFRF Open Data Research Opportunities
6. Thank you



# Overview of Research and Learning Priorities

## Office of Capital Access: Learning Agenda

- The Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 ("Evidence Act") emphasizes collaboration and coordination to advance data and evidence-building functions in the Federal Government by statutorily mandating Federal evidence-building activities, open government data, and confidential information protection and statistical efficiency (see: [OMB M-19-23](#))
- Overarching [Economic Recovery Learning Agenda](#) questions include:
  1. How did recovery funds stimulate an equitable economic recovery?
  2. How equitable was the impact of recovery funds on Americans most in need of assistance?
  3. What have we learned that can be applied to the development of future economic recovery programs?



## Equity Definition

**Equity:** The consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as:

- Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color;
- Members of religious minorities;
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons;
- Persons with disabilities;
- Persons who live in rural areas; and
- Persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

**[\(Executive Order 13985\)](#)**



## Equity and Positive Outcomes



“equity and outcomes are not mutually exclusive but rather inextricably linked— programs will not reach their true goals unless they are advancing more equitable outcomes.”

– Economic Recovery Learning Agenda



## Office of Recovery Programs: Research Designs

The Office of Capital Access (formerly the Office of Recovery Programs) is interested in learning from a variety of different research designs:



**Descriptive evaluations:** Describing the characteristics of those that received services or funds but not necessarily cause and effect



**Process evaluations:** Examining the process by which a program was implemented and the potential effects of program design choices



**Impact evaluations:** Measuring the causal impact of the program on beneficiaries



**Other Tools:** Data analysis, performance metrics, qualitative methods, and additional tools for examining the implementation and outcomes from programs

\* See page 6 of the Learning Agenda for more details



# Office of Recovery Programs: Research and Learning Priorities





# State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Background

# American Rescue Plan's State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)

## Key Objectives: American Rescue Plan's State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

- Fight the pandemic and support families and businesses struggling with its public health and economic impacts
- Maintain vital public services, even amid declines in revenue resulting from the crisis
- Build a strong, resilient, and equitable recovery by making investments that support long-term growth and opportunity

## Structure of the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds:

- \$350 billion to more than 30,000 state, territorial, local, and Tribal government recipients
- Funds must be obligated by December 31, 2024

# State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Progress to Date

## 1. Investing in Housing



**\$18.5 billion** budgeted for over **2,900** fiscal recovery projects focused on housing, a **4%** increase since the last reporting period.

## 2. Supporting Workers



Over **4,300** individual projects and **\$12.8 billion** dedicated to worker support and premium pay to **1.4 million** workers.

## State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)

provided under President Biden's American Rescue Plan Act continue to play a crucial role in allowing state, local, Tribal, and territorial governments to stabilize their budgets, respond to the pandemic, and invest in their communities.

View this page for key highlights, which are also available through the summary blog and the two year ARP anniversary report.

[October 2023 Summary Blog](#)

[ARP 2-Year Anniversary Report](#)

[Download October 2023 Dataset](#)

[Download Previous Datasets](#)

## 3. Stimulating Economic Growth Through Small Businesses



Over **1,500** small business projects with over **\$5 billion** budgeted.

## 4. Making Transformative Investments in Key Infrastructure



**3,300** governments pursuing **13,000** infrastructure projects, budgeting over **\$32.8 billion**. An increase of **5%** since the last reporting period.

## 5. Responding to Public Health Needs

More than **1,700** governments are undertaking over **6,300** individual projects in this area, budgeting more than **\$12.2 billion**.



Stats as of 3/31/23



# State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Learnings to Date

**Assisting Recipients:** Identifying strategies for better engaging and assisting recipient governments, in particular lower capacity governments:

- **Communications:**

A randomized [evaluation](#) conducted by Treasury and the U.S. Office of Evaluation Sciences (OES) found that step-by-step instructions in an email resulted in a 13 percent increase in recipient governments fulfilling SLFRF compliance requirements.

- **Compliance:**

A process [evaluation](#) conducted by Treasury and the U.S. Office of Evaluation Sciences examined the experience of low-capacity recipients with Treasury's compliance and reporting requirements.

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# State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Learnings to Date

- **State Fiscal Health:** Preliminary information about the effect of SLFRF on public sector finances:
  - Reports and descriptive research by the [Tax Policy Center](#), [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#) and the [National Association of State Budget Officers](#) on the positive effect of SLFRF on government revenue and spending, in contrast to the budget cuts that occurred during the Great Recession.

# State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Learning Areas

## Learning Area #1:

# What strategies and supports can improve recipient capacity and program implementation?

### Background

- SLFRF has 30,000+ recipient governments and many have never received federal funds before. Treasury is interested in learning how to best support recipients to effectively and equitably use funds, particularly lower-capacity local and Tribal governments.

### Example Research Project

- Treasury and the Office of Evaluation Sciences did a [study](#) of the experience of small local governments and Tribes with SLFRF reporting.

### Learning to Date

- The study on reporting and other [evaluations](#) on effective ways to communicate with SLFRF recipient governments have changed the information and support Treasury provides to low-capacity governments.

### Data

- Treasury is regularly releasing reporting data from SLFRF recipient governments through a [dashboard](#) on the Treasury website.



## Learning Area #2:

# How are SLFRF funds being distributed in ways that promote an equitable economic recovery?

### Background

### Example Research Project

### Learning to Date

### Data

- SLFRF rules, reporting guidance, and other materials have a [central focus](#) on equitable use of funds. Treasury is interested in learning about ways that recipients, individually and collectively, are using funds to increase equity in communities.
- A comparative study could examine how a cross section of governments spent SLFRF funds and use demographic data to examine how funds supported underserved populations in different communities.
- Governments, such as [Los Angeles County](#), have used demographic data to aid in their allocation of SLFRF funds and nonprofit organizations, such as the [California Pan-Ethnic Health Network](#) and the [New School](#), have done equity focused analysis of jurisdictions' spending.
- Treasury is [publicly releasing reporting data](#) from SLFRF recipient governments. This data has information on each project being undertaken by a recipient government, including certain demographic information on the target population for the project.





## Learning Area #3:

# What is the impact of specific SLFRF projects on priority policy areas such as affordable housing, workforce, and public safety?

### Background

### Example Research Project

### Learning to Date

### Data

- While SLFRF can be used for wide range of projects, Treasury has [encouraged](#) state, local, territorial, and Tribal governments to dedicate funds to affordable housing, workforce, and community violence interventions. Treasury also made clear that recipient governments may use SLFRF resources for evaluations.
- The State of Connecticut is conducting quasi-experimental research to examine gains for participants in its CareerConneCT program to train workers impacted by the pandemic for in demand careers such as advanced manufacturing and clean energy
- While it is early in the program implementation lifecycle, Treasury is collaborating with the federal Office of Evaluation Sciences to evaluate a small number of individual SLFRF projects focused on public safety.
- Treasury is [publicly releasing reporting data](#) from SLFRF recipient governments. To date, governments had reported more than 1,200 projects planned for evaluation, including nearly 400 projects in housing, workforce, and public safety.

## Learning Area #4: What is the impact of SLFRF funds on key economic indicators for state and local governments?

### Background

### Example Research Project

### Learning to Date

### Data

- SLFRF was designed to avoid a repeat of the Great Recession where state and local governments budget cuts were a drag on the economy for 3½ years.
- An evaluation could examine how SLFRF impacted recipient governments' fiscal health, including revenue, bond ratings, budget stability, and hiring.
- The national economic trajectory has been much different than during the Great Recession, with significant economic growth and record low unemployment rates. Early [analysis](#) of government fiscal health has found that SLFRF greatly improved the fiscal outlook for state and local governments.
- Among other potential data sources, SLFRF reporting collects information on recipient governments' revenue loss (over \$105 billion as of 10/31/23) and the Census Bureau collects data on fiscal indicators through its [Annual Survey of State and Local Government Finances](#).



**SLFRF**

# **Open Data Research Opportunities**

# Evidence Project Portal: Open Data Opportunity

## Funding

- Treasury does not have funds available for this research.

## Open Data Opportunity

- SLFRF reporting data (demographic distribution of SLFRF funds)
- State plans posted on Treasury's website
- Qualified Census Tracts

## Treasury *may*:

- Provide briefings to researchers about the SLFRF program, including information on program structure, the state plan approval process, available data, and program chronology.
- Assist with matchmaking between researchers and particular states
- Participate in regular meetings with researchers that are conducting an evaluation to discuss research progress and answer questions.

# Evidence Project Portal: Open Data Opportunity

## Anticipated Deliverables

### Meetings

Regular meetings with Treasury program and evaluation staff to discuss the research approach, the evaluation plan, initial findings, and reports.

### Evaluation Plan

An evaluation plan that Treasury will review before researchers begin any analysis. This evaluation plan should outline the researcher(s)' approach to evaluating the relevant research question, including methodology.

### Evaluation Report(s)

An interim report for review by Treasury and a final public report that include the results of the evaluation assessing how the SLFRF program is serving its recipients. Reports should include short (3-to-4 page) plain language summaries of results as well as documentation on methodology.

# Evidence Project Portal: Open Data Opportunity

## Planned Use of Research Results

- This research will help inform how the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) program works with state, territorial, local, and Tribal governments across the country to deliver \$350 billion to support their response to and recovery from the COVID-19 public health emergency
- Depending on the results, Treasury could use this research as the basis to create additional best practices and/or other tools that seek to increase the effectiveness of the SLFRF program.
- Looking ahead: this research will also inform Treasury's lessons learned from the American Rescue Plan programs as well as the federal government's long-term policy development for future Treasury programs to assist and provide aid in future economic crises.

# Answers to Submitted Questions

## **Would certain datasets that are not otherwise publicly available be made available?**

*You will have the same access allowed to anyone making an information request under the Freedom of Information Act, or FOIA, to a federal agency.*

## **I'm curious about there is an opportunity to collaborate with other companies and/or individuals to undertake this work.**

### **Are individual researchers eligible?**

Treasury understands that Subject Matter Experts are interested in conducting research, and these are areas that might be of particular interest to the public. The interested external researchers, whether working alone or in groups, may conduct additional evaluations. As noted previously, research of all kinds is valuable from descriptive and process studies to impact evaluations. These potential collaborations may be existing work that you are already doing or a new project you would be interested in undertaking.

## **What is the timing of SLFRF projects that are being considered for evaluation (e.g., 10 years ago or during COVID)?**

The Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) program was authorized by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) was signed into law on March 11, 2021.

# Thank you!

**Questions? Comments?**

Please send an email to [OSSPI@treasury.gov](mailto:OSSPI@treasury.gov)  
and kindly type

**RESEARCH and SLFRF**

in the subject line.



# Appendix

# Presentation Web Links

## **Slide 1**

<https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/state-and-local-fiscal-recovery-funds>

## **Slide 4**

White House OMB M-19-23

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/M-19-23.pdf>

Economic Recovery Learning Agenda (treasury.gov)

<https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/ERP-Learning-Agenda-Final.pdf>

## **Slide 5**

Executive Order 13985

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/20/executive-order-advancing-racial-equity-and-support-for-underserved-communities-through-the-federal-government/>

## **Slide 6**

Economic Recovery Learning Agenda (treasury.gov)

<https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/ERP-Learning-Agenda-Final.pdf>

## **Slide 10**

State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds | U.S. Department of the Treasury

<https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/state-and-local-fiscal-recovery-funds>

# Presentation Web Links

## Slide 12

Office of Evaluation Sciences – Randomized Evaluation

<https://oes.gsa.gov/projects/slfrf-early-signup/>

Office of Evaluation Sciences – Process Evaluation

<https://oes.gsa.gov/projects/slfrf-tribal-govs-neus/>

## Slide 13

Tax Policy Center

<https://www.taxpolicycenter.org/taxvox/viewing-arpa-aid-states-and-localities-through-great-recession-lens>

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

<https://www.cbpp.org/research/state-budget-and-tax/how-states-can-best-use-federal-fiscal-recovery-funds-lessons-from>

National Association of State Budget Officers

[https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/NASBO/9d2d2db1-c943-4f1b-b750-0fca152d64c2/UploadedImages/Fiscal Survey/NASBO\\_Fall\\_2022\\_Fiscal\\_Survey\\_of\\_States\\_S.pdf](https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/NASBO/9d2d2db1-c943-4f1b-b750-0fca152d64c2/UploadedImages/Fiscal_Survey/NASBO_Fall_2022_Fiscal_Survey_of_States_S.pdf)

## Slide 15

Office of Evaluation Sciences

<https://oes.gsa.gov/projects/slfrf-tribal-govs-neus/>

Office of Evaluation Sciences

<https://oes.gsa.gov/projects/slfrf-early-signup/>

Treasury SLFRF Dashboard – Reporting Data

<https://www.treasury.gov/SLFRF-Dashboard>

# Presentation Web Links

## **Slide 16**

White House - ARP

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/ADVANCING-EQUITY-THROUGH-THE-AMERICAN-RESCUE-PLAN.pdf#page=109>

Los Angeles County Recovery

<https://ceo.lacounty.gov/recovery/explore-the-data/#equityexplorer>

California Pan-Ethnic Health Network

<https://cpehn.org/arpascorecards/>

New School

<https://www.policylink.org/ARPA-equity/case-studies>

Treasury SLFRF Dashboard – Reporting Data

<https://treasury.gov/SLFRF-Dashboard>

## **Slide 17**

Deputy Secretary Adeyemo Letter to SLFRF Recipients

[https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Deputy\\_Secretary\\_Adeyemo\\_Letter\\_SLFRF\\_Recipients\\_2022\\_5\\_16.pdf](https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Deputy_Secretary_Adeyemo_Letter_SLFRF_Recipients_2022_5_16.pdf)

Treasury SLFRF Dashboard – Reporting Data

<https://treasury.gov/SLFRF-Dashboard>

## **Slide 18**

Tax Policy Center

<https://www.taxpolicycenter.org/taxvox/viewing-arpa-aid-states-and-localities-through-great-recession-lens>

Annual Survey of State and Local Government Finances

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/gov-finances.html>