# Political Left Has Captured Federal Grant-Giving Departments, Experts Say

Billions of federal dollars go to left-wing causes because activists control federal bureaucracy—and that's not likely to change soon, an analyst predicts.

#### By Jackson Elliott 10/24/2023

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he federal government pays for initiatives promoting transgenderism and other LGBT causes because left-wing bureaucrats have captured federal grant-giving programs, experts say.

"When you dig into who staffs federal agencies, they're absolutely dominated by people on the left side of the political spectrum," David Ditch, senior budget policy analyst for The Heritage Foundation, told The Epoch Times.

"That has been the case for a very long time. I expect that will be the case indefinitely, regardless of who wins the next presidential election."

Mr. Ditch and others have scoured federal grant records. They've found patterns that point to LGBT activists entrenched in federal agencies, making decisions on which projects to fund and which organizations in the United States and beyond will receive taxpayer money to execute their plans.

Grants awarded in the past four years include \$65,000 for a "Queer Arts Festival" in San Francisco. Another grant provided \$2,315 to help "professional transgender women makeup entrepreneurs" in Nepal. And, the University of Washington received \$350,000 to translate an LGBT sex manual into Spanish.

From Oct. 1, 2020, through Sept. 30, 2023, the federal government spent more than \$4.1 billion on grants with descriptions that included the keywords "LGBT" or "transgender," an Epoch Times investigation found.

## Gaining Ground in Government

Although the Left has long held a political advantage in the federal bureaucracy, LGBT activist groups have gained new ground under President Joe Biden, Mr. Ditch said.

"A lot of [former President Barack Obama's] staffers felt that they needed to restrain some of their most extreme impulses," Mr. Ditch said.

"There is no such restraint going on in the Biden administration."

During President Obama's administration, the top executive kept activists in the federal bureaucracy in check, he said. But President Biden, he said, has proven either unwilling or unable to do so.

Biden administration decision-makers who award grants are "happy to give grants to decidedly ideological, activist organizations," Mr. Ditch said.

"They will continue to act this way as long as they have these trillions of dollars in financial resources provided to them by American taxpayers."

Even within the administration of former President Donald Trump, a Republican, the federal government awarded grants to left-wing causes, Mr. Ditch said.

Government workers award an "unbelievable torrent of grants on everything constantly," he said

And that taxpayer funding of left-wing political activism helps the political Left grow ever stronger, Mr. Ditch said.

## **Funding a Left-Wing Agenda**

Grants funding transgender-related causes have grown exponentially in the past two years, federal records show.

From 2008 to 2020, the U.S. government



passed out \$184 million to grant applicants for project descriptions that included the keyword "transgender," according to the Capital Research Center (CRC), an investigative think tank.

But from 2021 to Sep. 12, 2023, a total of \$1.2 billion was given out in the form of grants, direct payments, and low-interest loans for projects described using "transgender" as a keyword, CRC researchers found.

The CRC research notes that not all of that money went to fund transgender causes directly. Many of those grants included the word "transgender" in diversity statements but didn't focus primarily on transgender spending.

However, at least \$104 million of that federal spending explosion went to initiatives that mostly or entirely promoted, subsidized, or studied transgenderism, CRC researchers found.

Left-wing ideological capture is so extensive that almost no federal department is untouched, CRC researcher Parker Thayer told The Epoch Times in an email.

Federal departments that have given grants to LGBT activist causes include the U.S. Agency for International Development Independent (USAID), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the Department of Education (DOE), the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Department of State (DOS), and the Department of Defense (DOD), according to a federal spending database.



Children cheer as drag performers dance at the Chattanooga Pride parade in Chattanooga, Tenn., on Oct. 2, 2022. Jackson Elliott/The Epoch Times

USAID and the NEH operate independently. But the other departments report directly to the U.S. president.

The Epoch Times contacted the agencies and the White House for comment but received no response by publication time.

The Biden administration's funding of medical research into transgenderism and the promotion of transgenderism creates an ideological dilemma, Mr. Parker wrote.

His take is that if scientists don't know yet whether it's harmful for people who identify as transgender to undergo sex-change surgeries or use cross-sex hormones, the federal government shouldn't use taxpayer money to pay for those procedures.

And if current science proves transgender

medical procedures help people, grants funding additional studies shouldn't be necessary, he wrote.

"Either the science on transgenderism isn't settled, and the Biden administration is lying [that it's been proven to be helpful to people], or the science is settled and the Biden administration is wasting tens of millions of dollars on pointless medical research," Mr. Parker wrote.

"I think that most reasonable people would agree that the administration is both lying and wasting taxpayer money."

#### 'Diversity' Statements Required

The term "LGBT" appears in so-called Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) statements in many grant applications. And that makes it complicated to know how much federal money actually goes to LGBT activism, Mr. Parker wrote.

Researchers with his group spent the time to painstakingly "sift through the diversity statements to discover the rapidly increasing spending on transgender medical research, LGBT arts festivals, and LGBT activism," Mr. Parker wrote.

DEI statements are so common now that USAID defines "marginalized groups" to include people who identify as LGBT.

"Such groups may include, but are not limited to, women and girls, persons with disabilities, LGBT people, displaced persons, migrants, Adivasi/Janajati, youth and the elderly, religious and linguistic minorities, Dalit castes, and people of diverse economic class and political opinions," a USAID grant's definition for "marginalized" reads.

"The Biden administration has required many organizations submitting grants to also include DEI statements alongside their applications," Mr. Parker said.

## Who Decides Where Money Goes?

Grants that promote left-wing ideology don't originate from a politically neutral government that decides to pass out money to left-wing activist organizations that apply for grants, Mr. Ditch said.

Rather, the trend begins with a left-leaning government that creates left-wing grant opportunities, he said.

Federal employees take the lead role by creating grant application guidelines posted on a federal database. Those show the kinds of projects they want to fund.

One U.S. grant opportunity seeks grant applicants to do work in Sri Lanka, officially known as the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

The opportunity is described this way: "The project will support civil society organizations, including but not limited to human rights organizations, youth movements, informal groups, religious organizations, labor and trade unions, professional associations, indigenous organizations, women organizations,

Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) organizations, and think tanks."

Organizations hoping to receive grant money submit applications showing how they can fulfill the request. Department employees then review the applications and choose which organizations will receive money for proposed projects that fulfill the grant requirements.

This process gives federal employees immense power, Mr. Ditch said.

There's no easy way to shift control of the federal grant-making machine toward political neutrality, he said.



The U.S. Capitol building in Washington on Sept. 30, 2023. Anna Moneymaker/Getty Images

Federal employees "are going to default toward groups that they're more ideologically inclined toward," Mr. Ditch said. And currently, that's overwhelmingly in the direction of the political Left, he said.

"The solution is not trying to nudge the federal Leviathan a tenth of a degree toward the right," Mr. Ditch said.

The solution, he said, "is to stop giving [federal employees] so much money" to give away.