FEDERAL SPENDING ON INTERSECTIONALITY

The Case for Federal Action

August **2026**

A new report by LIF and DFI (summary)

The Trump Administration has sought to eliminate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) from federal grantmaking through a series of executive orders that have laudably targeted a wide range of discriminatory practices. But the Legal Insurrection Foundation (LIF) and the Defense of Freedom Institute (DFI) recently produced a revealing report, titled **"Federal Spending on Intersectionality: The Case for Executive Action to End Identity-Based Preferences in Federal Grantmaking,"** demonstrating that intersectionality, the core ideology behind DEI, has been funded by the federal government for over a decade and continues to benefit from American tax dollars. **LIF and DFI are calling on the administration to close this loophole and clearly prohibit federal funding for the discriminatory application of intersectionality.**

legalinsurrectionfoundation.org
dfipolicy.org

Intersectionality ideology was exposed in a prior LIF/DFI report titled "Intersectionality: The Rise of a Dangerous Anti-American Ideology and How to Stop It," published in April 2026. Our new report presents additional evidence demonstrating the urgent need to cut off federal funding for intersectional discrimination.

Intersectionality often travels under other names. It may appear as racial equity, gender equity, climate justice, multiculturalism, LGBTQ+ inclusion, lived experience, anti-racism, intersectional stigma, minority stress, or similar language. That flexibility makes it durable: once one label draws scrutiny, the same preference system can be repackaged in more-technical terms and continue moving through grant notices, scoring criteria, reporting obligations, and program design.

Key Points

- **The money is real.** A USAspending.gov search identified 249 federal assistance award records using the keyword "intersectionality," totaling about $230 million in obligations and about $140 million in outlays, subject to normal data updates.

- **The reach is wide.** The awards cut across health research, STEM education, disability policy, violence prevention, technical assistance, institutional-change projects, conferences, curricula, equity measurement, and program design at multiple agencies.

- **The issue is not over.** Many awards appear to remain active, with performance periods extending into 2027, 2028, 2029, and 2030. That gives agencies room to stop future outlays or redirect funds under lawful, neutral criteria.

Why It Matters

The concern is not that every project listed in the report is entirely illegitimate. Programs in health care, cancer research, disability services, violence prevention, STEM education, and related fields can serve lawful and important purposes. The problem begins when those purposes are filtered through identity-politics frameworks that influence eligibility, priority, scoring, reporting, or compliance burdens.

That is why the report focuses on intersectionality—a framework that sorts people and communities through assumptions about oppression, privilege, and marginalization tied to collective status. This approach shifts public funds away from measurable outcomes and toward trainings, equity reviews, workshops, metrics, technical assistance, consultant work, and reporting systems built around ideology rather than equal treatment.

Recommended Action

- A presidential **executive order** should close the intersectionality loophole across grants, cooperative agreements, trainings, reporting systems, compliance requirements, and other federal assistance activity.

- **Agency guidance** should translate that rule into day-to-day practice for grant officers, reviewers, auditors, program staff, and recipients, including funding notices, scoring, award conditions, cost allowability, monitoring, audits, corrective actions, and closeout.

- A revised **OMB rule** should state that protected characteristics may not be used directly, through proxies, or through composite intersectional categories.

Bottom Line

Federal grantmaking should serve the law, neutral standards, and measurable public need—not an ideology that sorts Americans through ever-expanding identity categories. When intersectionality, racial equity, climate justice, lived experience, minority stress, or similar terms are used to shape eligibility, scoring, reporting, compliance, or program design, they can become vehicles for preferences that civil rights law does not permit.

Barring federal funding for intersectionality directly in a presidential executive order, OMB's final rule, and agency guidance would close that practical gap, protect equal treatment, and make clear that agencies and recipients may not evade civil rights obligations by stacking protected characteristics into a new label.

READ the report