



A brief guide to: the annual budget, appropriations and funding for science

OVERVIEW

Each year the federal government establishes a budget for the upcoming fiscal year, which goes from October 1 to September 30.

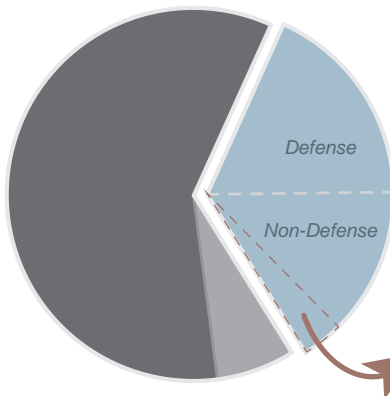
Budget Breakdown

Mandatory Spending

- Typically ~60% of the budget
- Dominated by earned-benefit or entitlement programs
- Spending levels determined by eligibility rules
- Does **not** take place through appropriations

National Debt Interest

- The interest the government pays to the nation's accumulated debt, minus the interest income received on assets it owns



Discretionary Spending

- Typically ~30% of the budget
- Broken into two relatively equal categories **Defense** and **Non-Defense**
- Determined through appropriations

Funding for most scientific agencies falls under a small portion of the non-defense discretionary funding, which is determined through appropriations. This includes: **NIH, NSF, NOAA, NASA, DOE, EPA and USGS**

APPROPRIATIONS

Idealized appropriations timeline



Executive Branch

The Administration's budget request:

- Starts with funding proposals submitted by federal agencies
- Is led by the Office of Management and Budget
- Acts as a statement of the administration's fiscal goals and policy preferences
- Has no binding authority



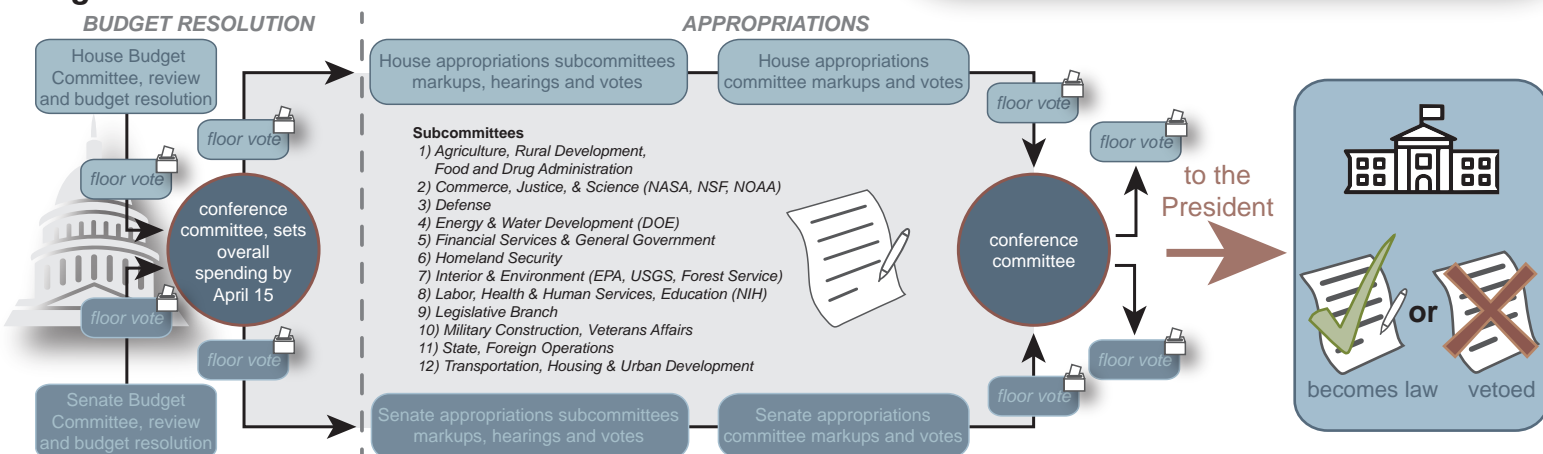
Things to know:

Government shutdown: occurs if the appropriations bills are not finalized by September 30, and federal agencies must discontinue all non-essential functions until new funding legislation is signed into law—essential services and mandatory spending programs continue to function

Continuing resolution or a stopgap bill: a temporary funding measure to allow Congress more time to reach an agreement on the appropriation bills, averting a government shutdown

Omnibus: a type of bill that packages many appropriations bills into one larger bill that can be passed with one vote in both the House and the Senate

Legislative Process



Scientists' roles:

Science engagement is an important part of the appropriations process because it:

- 1) helps protect and increase funding for science
- 2) facilitates innovation and advances discovery
- 3) brings public visibility to the importance of science

Scientific engagement makes a difference. Reaching out to legislative offices, scientists can provide important perspective on both the personal importance of science as well as how federal funding for science bolsters communities

Want to get involved, but not sure where to begin? Find resources at www.geosociety.org/policy or reach out to GSA's policy office at sciencepolicy@geosociety.org