Guidance Document for the Fiscal Year 2026 Community for Data Integration Request for Proposals

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Overview

This document describes the CDI Request for Proposals (RFP) process for fiscal year 2026 (FY26). The CDI RFP consists of a two-stage process: Statements of Interest (SOI) and Full Proposals.

Contact *gs_cdi@usgs.gov* with any questions about the CDI RFP.

Additional resources for the RFP are available on the *CDI SharePoint site*.

If you are outside of the Department of the Interior, you can request access to the CDI SharePoint at *https://forms.office.com/g/x1QsgvQABq*.

New in FY26

- **Themes for the FY26 Request for Proposals:** This year, the CDI is encouraging proposals that support the themes of R2X (Research to Technology, Application, Operations, or any other specialized use) and USGS Data Strategy goals to support USGS and Department of the Interior Priorities. (See the "FY26 Topical Emphasis" section for more details.)

- **Maximum requested funds:** Applicants can request funding up to $60,000 per project (previously $55,000).

- **Statement on the use of generative AI:** If generative AI is used, the CDI requires responsible and transparent use following USGS guidance linked in this document. (See the "Use of Generative AI in the RFP Process" section for more details.)

Eligibility

Personnel from any USGS mission area, region, program, center, office, or duty station and their partner(s) are encouraged to apply. All proposals must specify a **USGS Federal employee** as lead Principal Investigator (PI). USGS personnel may be involved in more than one prospective proposal but may be the lead PI on only *one* proposal. **Partners outside of the USGS may be included on project teams but check with your Center's administrative team and your external partners on the requirements and timing for executing these partnerships according to USGS policy.** We recommend you confirm the planned method of executing the partnership early in the process.

Schedule for Submission, Review, and Awards

This is a tentative schedule, please check the schedule posted on the *2026 Proposals SharePoint site* for any changes.

RFP Information Session	September 24, 2025, 3 pm ET
Submission deadline for Statement of Interest	November 5, 2025, 5 pm ET
Comment period begins	November 10, 2025
SOI Lightning Presentation Session	November 12, 2025, 11-12:30 pm ET
SOI voting opens	November 19, 2025
SOI voting closes	December 10, 2025, 11:59 pm ET
Applicants notified and Full Proposals requested	Mid-December 2025
Invited Full Proposals due	February 4, 2026, 5 pm ET
Funded Projects announced	March 2026
Awarded funds must be spent	September 11, 2026

Estimated Available Funds and Distribution of Funds

Support for CDI projects varies yearly and is directly influenced by the overall USGS budget. Since fiscal year 2009, CDI projects have been funded at a total of $400,000 – $600,000 each year.

Applicants can request funding up to $60,000 per project. CDI will distribute funds to the lead PI's USGS Science Center only, and their Science Center is responsible for further distributions to other Centers or external partners.

IMPORTANT: **CDI funds are NOT defined as "grants"** and will not be treated as such by the USGS Office of Acquisitions and Grants. Please make sure your administrative team understands that these funds must follow the same requisition deadlines and funding policies of the usual appropriated funds we receive in the USGS, if you receive funds for your CDI Proposal.

Project Reporting and Requirements

- Dependent on travel policy in the coming year, a representative from each CDI project will be required to attend and present at an in-person meeting (TBD).
- Project teams must participate in a separate informal mid-year briefing to the CDI facilitators to communicate the project's status.
- Project teams will be required to contribute to a CDI report, which will be compiled in early 2027. At that time, project leads must provide a brief written report describing the project accomplishments, benefits, and deliverables with links to products or publications.

- Project teams must give a presentation to the CDI Monthly Meeting (virtual) within a year of completing the project.
- Project teams should include the following statement in the acknowledgement section of any related publications or products (e.g., data, software, etc.) to recognize CDI support: *This work was supported by the U.S. Geological Survey Community for Data Integration (CDI).*

Application Process Summary

1. PIs Submit Statement of Interest and Present Lightning Talk

- **Plan.** To aid the development of statements of interest, CDI has set up the *RFP Collaboration channel on Microsoft Teams* for potential submitters to seek partners or feedback. If you are external to the Department of the Interior, you can request access at *https://forms.office.com/g/x1QsgvQABq*.
- **Submit.** Use the SOI Instructions and Worksheet file to prepare information for submission in the SOI submission form. The link for submission will be available on the *2026 Proposals SharePoint site.*
- **Present.** After SOIs are received, the CDI will host a virtual session for submitters to present their proposals to the community in a 90-second, one-slide lightning-talk format. The purpose of the session is to help submitters receive suggestions, gain support from the community, and help the community efficiently learn about the breadth of the SOIs.

2. Community Evaluates of Statements of Interest

SOIs will be reviewed by the CDI Community for relevance and interest. CDI members on the *CDI GovDelivery mailing list* will receive all statements and instructions for commenting and voting by email.

3. CDI Invites Teams to Submit Full Proposal

Based on the SOI community evaluation, selected SOI applicants will be invited to submit a Full Proposal. Note that the CDI Executive Sponsors may also advance SOIs that support current USGS priorities or RFP themes.

4. Review Panel Evaluates Full Proposals

Full proposals will be evaluated according to the *Evaluation Criteria for the Full Proposals*. Proposals will be reviewed by a peer group panel of professionals knowledgeable in USGS-related scientific disciplines, data management, information technology, and other relevant topics in the context of the CDI. Recommendations by the review panel will be presented to the CDI Executive Sponsors for final selection.

Description of the Request for Proposals

The CDI builds and shares knowledge about topics such as data integration, data stewardship, scientific computing, and approaches for knowledge delivery. CDI projects help to advance the ***USGS Data Strategy***.

Guiding Principles

The main goal of CDI project support is to improve our collective knowledge about creating better, longer-lasting, and more accessible science products by leveraging the tools, methods, and datasets available to USGS-related science communities. The CDI places high value on innovative projects that, in the near term, produce new and reusable ideas, methods, or tools that have an impact beyond a single USGS Program, Science Center, Region, or Mission Area. CDI project proposals should follow these guiding principles:

- Focus on targeted efforts that yield near-term benefits to Earth and biological science
- Leverage existing capabilities and data
- Implement and demonstrate innovative solutions (e.g., methodologies, tools, or integration concepts) that could be used or replicated by others at scales from project to enterprise
- Preserve, expose, and improve access to Earth and biological science data, models, and other outputs
- Develop, organize, and share knowledge and best practices in data integration

FY26 Topical Emphasis

Each year, the CDI accepts statements of interest on any topic that follow the CDI guiding principles, noting that the CDI Executive Sponsors may select proposals that support current USGS priorities. In 2026, the CDI encourages statements of interest that address the following themes:

- **R2X (Research to Technology, Application, Operations, or any other specialized use)**
- **USGS Data Strategy goals in support of USGS and Department of the Interior priorities**

R2X, stands for Research to Technology, Application, Operation, or any other specialized use. In the context of the CDI, this theme aligns our CDI Guiding Principles and our data-focused expertise with the goal of more broadly usable applications and tools.

Examples of relevant projects include those that:

- Improves efficiency of a data pipeline for a product that supports a publicly-used application.
- Demonstrates a dynamic data release workflow to support existing technology or applications.

The vision of the ***USGS Data Strategy*** is to increase the production of unbiased, accessible, high-quality, and interoperable data, managed as a strategic asset, and offered at scales and timeframes relevant to society's needs.

The Strategy's goals are to:

- Maximize the utility of USGS data with FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) practices.
- Foster innovation in data and technology.
- Coordinate common data policies, methods, and standards.
- Build a strong, scalable data infrastructure.
- Strengthen USGS workforce data literacy and the data-centric culture.

Examples of relevant projects include those that:

- Develop training or resource materials that can be broadly used in the USGS pertaining to the Data Strategy goals and objectives.
- Facilitate activities that build an informed community around the Data Strategy goals and objectives.

Links providing context for these themes:

- USGS Risk Community of Practice 2025 R2X Webinar Series
  - *Risk Community of Practice Meeting History Library** (see R2O/R2X meetings from May 2025 to present)
- USGS Strategies
  - *USGS Data Strategy*
- Department of the Interior Priorities
  - *Department of the Interior FY 2026-2030 Strategic Plan (DRAFT)* (2025)
- Other relevant documents on topics of CDI interest
  - *USGS FAIR Roadmap report* (2022)
  - *USGS Capacity Assessment* (2021)

* These links (and other links in this document with an asterisk) are accessible to any USGS employee (such as the Lead PI) when on the USGS network/VPN.

Submissions are not required to address one of these themes. The CDI will accept submissions on any topic that follow the CDI guiding principles. Of total funding, CDI aims to award at least 50% of funding to qualified projects that are associated with the stated themes.

Tips for Gaining Community Support

The CDI proposals process is unique: the selection process incorporates community involvement, including from people who probably don't share your disciplinary expertise. Here are some tips for gaining community support for your statement of interest.

- We encourage project teams to raise awareness about their submitted statement of interest and talk about its value and benefits. However, we discourage broad blasts for votes that don't guide the recipients to read and evaluate all statements. Example of encouraged text: "I have submitted a Statement of Interest to the CDI Request for Proposals. View my statement and others at the CDI SharePoint site and vote!" Example of discouraged text: "Vote for my statement in the CDI Request for Proposals process!"
- The use of **plain language and the absence of jargon** is critical for communicating the value of your project to CDI's diverse membership.
- Make sure to engage with the CDI members who ask questions and make suggestions during the comment phase. This helps to build our collective knowledgebase.
- Use constructive language when interacting about proposals.

These unique aspects help the CDI toward its goal of supporting the most useful and innovative ideas, as well as communicating across boundaries. A more traditional review process occurs in Phase 2, where a formal review panel evaluates the invited full proposals.

Use of Generative AI in the RFP Process

The CDI does not prohibit the use of generative AI tools in our RFP process. However, we require responsible and transparent use, which is outlined in the USGS Leaders Blog post *Navigating Generative AI: What it Is, How it Works, and How to Use it Responsibly* (link accessible to USGS employees).

The post links to further public information such as:
FAQ 209: Generative Artificial Intelligence and USGS Scientific Products
FAQ 210: Restrictions on Using Generative AI in USGS Scientific Products
FAQ 211: Ensuring Reliability and Accuracy of AI-Generated Content
FAQ 212: Safeguarding USGS Information When Using AI Tools

Statement of Interest Lightning Presentation

To help the CDI community learn about the statements of interest, we host a Statement of Interest Lightning Presentation Session at the beginning of the commenting and voting period. Each submitter has the chance to present their SOI idea in an online, 90-second lightning presentation. Submitted slides must follow a strict template with project title and a single static image. Submitters have the option to pre-record a 90-second presentation as an audio file, or to present live. **The FY26 Lightning Presentation Session will be on Wednesday, November 12, 2025, from 11:00 am – 12:30 pm ET.**

CDI Science Support Framework

Project proposals must relate to elements of the CDI Science Support Framework (SSF), which categorizes and relates the activities and processes through which research data flows, and upon which the CDI operates. These elements include Data Management, Knowledge Management, the stages of the *Science Data Lifecycle Model*, Applications, Web services, Semantics, Information, Data Assets, and Communities of Practice (*See Appendix A – CDI Science Support Framework (SSF)*).

To help the CDI track areas of community interest and expertise, project teams will be asked to identify the three most relevant SSF elements in both their Statement of Interest (SOI) submission and, if invited, in their Full Proposal submission.

Proposal Concepts that should *not* be submitted to the CDI

The CDI does not seek to replace traditional natural science research or to fill a funding gap on a project supported elsewhere. Examples of topics that are a poor fit for CDI funding include:

- Supporting the collection of new data or field research.
- Monitoring, assessment, or dataset creation projects. Although the CDI may fund the creation of some broadly-usable ("foundational") data content, this is normally considered out of scope.
- Projects that would normally be funded by individual USGS Program Areas.
- Projects that would normally be funded by other proposal processes such as the *John Wesley Powell Center for Analysis and Synthesis* or the *Risk Community of Practice RFP* (link accessible to USGS employees).

View examples of successful past CDI statements of interest and full proposals on the *CDI SharePoint Example Proposals* page. View all past CDI Projects as a list on *the CDI SharePoint* and descriptions on the *USGS CDI website*.

NOTE: the template for Statements of Interest was changed in FY2024. Please be sure to follow the FY2026 Statements of Interest template on the *2026 Proposals SharePoint site*.

Evaluation Criteria for the Statements of Interest

The community will be considering the following elements, which mirror the statement of interest template:

What is the proposer trying to do? Are objectives stated clearly using no jargon? Are the limits of current practice and the benefits of the proposed methods communicated?

Who will benefit? What groups will benefit and how will people learn about the project? What difference will it make? What lessons will be passed on to the CDI?

How will success be measured? What are the anticipated deliverables? Are there mid-term and final checks for success?

Are the budget and timeline reasonable? Is the budget reasonable? Is completion of the proposed project possible within 6-8 months?

Evaluation Criteria for the Full Proposals

Full proposals will be evaluated based on the following six criteria, which mirror the sections of the full proposal template.

Scope (25%)

Does the proposal adequately demonstrate the need for the effort or activity? How much does the proposal contribute to the guiding principles and element(s) of the CDI Science Support Framework? Does the effort have potential impact beyond a single Program, Center, Mission Area, or Region? What is the anticipated return on investment (e.g., cost savings, code utilization, publications, operational efficiencies, etc.)

Technical Approach (25%)

How reasonable is the technical approach applied to the problem? Is the approach innovative, *or* does it employ a proven, reliable technique that is appropriate to the problem? How appropriate are the steps, methodologies, technologies, and resources proposed to implement the project? This includes facilities, computational/analytic platforms and tools, hardware/software, and other equipment supporting the project and/or its products.

Project Experience and Collaboration (25%)

How appropriate are the experience, special qualifications, and skills possessed by team members for successful completion of the proposed project? Is there inter-disciplinary or

cross-Mission Area/Region collaboration? Have partnerships been pursued where appropriate? Is there diversity of the project team in expertise and career stage?

Sustainability, Outreach, and Communication (15%)

How well does the proposal describe the intended sustainability of the project deliverables (products, tools, services, metadata) for long-term access, reusability, and potential for integration? Is there a plan for communicating the value of the products during and after the project is completed?

Project Outputs: All products resulting from CDI projects must comply with the *U.S. Geological Survey Manual Chapters* on data management (SM 502.6-502.9). These products must be freely shared and made available, without charge or restriction, to the CDI, the broader USGS community, and beyond as appropriate. Software products developed with CDI funding must be available on code.usgs.gov at the close of the funding period and follow the latest relevant USGS Instructional Memoranda (*IM OSQI 2019-01, Review and Approval of Scientific Software for Release*).

Budget Justification (5%)

Is the requested amount at or below $60,000? Does the budget meet the minimum 30% in-kind match? (A $60,000 request would require a $18,000 in-kind match.) The in-kind match demonstrates commitment of effort by the participating organizations. The in-kind match is commonly met by salary of team members that have time to contribute to the project. Travel cannot include field data collection. Travel funds of $2,000 must be included for at least one representative to attend a TBD in-person event. The travel requirement will be contingent on USGS travel policy in FY26. Is there justification of salaries and contractor costs, travel, and equipment/publication costs to show that they are appropriate to project needs? Are the proposed work hours reasonable within the timeframe? Projects with contractor support must describe how the contract work will be managed and documented to ensure that products are USGS property.

Timeline (5%)

Is there clear presentation of the project phases and milestones and the feasibility of the proposed workload given the short project duration? Although notification of award may come earlier, assume that funding will be awarded no sooner than May 31, 2026 and reference specific months or dates within FY26 or relative to time from date of award (e.g., 3 weeks after award date). **The timeline must demonstrate reasonable completion by September 30, 2026, and complete use of funds by Friday, September 11, 2026.** Recognizing the USGS publication process may take additional time beyond the end of the project, indicate the anticipated publication date for any USGS publications resulting from the project.

Phase 1 Statement of Interest (SOI) Guidance

The instructions have been revised over the years, make sure you only use materials from this year's RFP.

All documents and links mentioned can be found at the *2026 Proposals SharePoint Site*. (*Request access* if needed.)

Contact gs_cdi@usgs.gov (the CDI facilitators inbox) if you have any questions.

The six steps for Phase 1 participation

Step 1.	Read the **Guidance Document** (this file).
Step 2.	Collect the information specified on the **SOI Instructions and Worksheet file**.
Step 3.	Complete the **SOI Budget Template** estimated budget.
Step 4.	Submit your information and files (including lightning files) using the **submission form.**
Step 5.	Present your **90-second talk** at the Lightning Presentation Session.
Step 6.	Interact and answer any questions on your **Statement of Interest page.**

More detail about the six steps of Phase 1: How and When

Step 1. Read the Guidance Document (this file).

How: Thoroughly.

When: As soon as possible.

Step 2. Collect the information specified on the SOI Instructions and Worksheet file.

How: The Instructions and Worksheet file can be downloaded from the *2026 Proposals SharePoint Site*. It describes all the fields that will be requested in the SOI submission form. We are providing this worksheet for you to type and save the information before copying and pasting into the submission form. This will avoid any loss of data if the submission form

malfunctions. Enter the fields requested into the .docx worksheet file, we recommend using the Microsoft Word Desktop App.

When: Ideally, several days before the submission deadline of **Wednesday, November 5**, 2025, at 5 pm ET, in case you have questions for the CDI team at gs_cdi@usgs.gov.

Step 3. Complete the SOI Budget Template document with an estimated budget.

How: The file can be downloaded from the *2026 Proposals SharePoint Site*. We recommend using the Microsoft Word Desktop App to fill out the template. **Do not change the document margins or font size.**

Enter estimated values for the Personnel, Travel Expenses (including $2000 for the travel requirement), and Other Direct Costs categories. Enter the total direct costs and the indirect costs due to relevant overhead. Enter the grand total.

In Phase 1, it is suggested, but not required, that your budget be reviewed by a Center budget analyst, so that you have an accurate picture to correctly estimate funds.

When: Ideally, several days before the submission deadline of **Wednesday, November 5**, 2025, at 5 pm ET, in case you have questions for the CDI team at gs_cdi@usgs.gov.

Step 4. Submit your information and files (including lightning files) using the submission form.

How: The submission form will be linked on the main *2026 Proposals SharePoint Site*. Only Department of Interior employees will be able to access the link. Use the information on your completed worksheet (Step 2) to fill out the submission form. We recommend that you complete and submit the entire submission form in one sitting.

You will be asked to upload the following files:

1. SOI Budget Template in .docx format
2. Lightning Presentation Image: Select a simple STATIC image (.png or .jpg work great) with **minimal** text that is close to 1:1 aspect ratio (square). We will insert this image onto a slide that has your Title on it. Our reason for these requirements is that we want you to focus on your message and timing, not the slide!
3. OPTIONAL: If you cannot present live on November 12, details for uploading an optional audio file are in the submission form.

When: Ideally, several days before the submission deadline of **Wednesday, November 5**, 2025, at 5 pm ET, in case you have questions for the CDI team at gs_cdi@usgs.gov.

Step 5. Present your 90-second talk at the Lightning Presentation Session.

How: The purpose of the lightning talk session is to help familiarize CDI members with all SOIs before voting. Craft a pitch that is up to 90 seconds long, **avoiding jargon and using plain language** to persuade CDI members to support your idea. Follow the framework of the three questions on the SOI template to emphasize the value of your idea, the intended users, and the measures of success.

Join the Microsoft Teams meeting link on the calendar event that will be distributed to submitters and all CDI members. The CDI team will be in touch with all SOI submitters before the event to make sure everyone has what they need. **Don't forget to practice!**

When: Wednesday, **November 12**, 2025, 11-12:30 pm ET

Step 6. Interact and answer any questions on your Statement of Interest page.

How: CDI members will be able to post questions or comments on your Statement of Interest page in SharePoint. We recommend that you monitor the page and respond to questions and comments. CDI facilitators will help you navigate to this page when it is created and may help notify you of unanswered questions.

When: During the comment and voting period, **November 10 – December 10, 2025.**

Phase 2 Invited Full Proposal Guidance

The five steps for Phase 2 Full Proposal Submission

Step 1.	Review the **Guidance Document** (this file).
Step 2.	Collect and update your **Cover Sheet** from Phase 1 (provided by CDI staff).
Step 3.	Complete the **Full Proposal package**, using the template files and observing maximum page lengths. This includes your narrative, data management plan, CVs, any letters of support, and detailed budget.
Step 4.	Ensure the name of a budget analyst or AO from your Center that has **reviewed your budget** is documented in the space provided on the budget sheet.
Step 5.	Submit your information and upload your full proposal file and budget file using the **submission form** that will be linked on the main *2026 Proposals SharePoint page*.

More detail about the five steps of Phase 2: How and When

Step 1. Review the Guidance Document (this file).

How: Thoroughly.

When: As soon as possible.

Step 2. Collect and update your Cover Sheet from Phase 1 (provided by CDI staff).

How: A cover sheet will be provided to invited Lead PIs with Phase 1 information, to be updated as necessary.

When: The cover sheet will be made available at the time of invitation to full proposals.

Step 3. Complete the Full Proposal package, using the template file and observing maximum page lengths. This includes your narrative, data management plan, CVs, any letters of support, and detailed budget.

How: Proposals must be prepared using the Full Proposal template that will be available on the *2026 Proposals SharePoint site* (*Request access* if needed).

When: Ideally, several days before the submission deadline of February 4, 2026, at 5 pm ET, in case you have questions for the CDI team at gs_cdi@usgs.gov.

Details:

Proposal Narrative

The main body of the proposal should consist of six sections. Prepare the sections according to the Evaluation Criteria for the Statement of Interest and Full Proposal described in this Guidance Document.

- Scope
- Technical Approach
- Project Experience and Collaboration
- Sustainability, Outreach, and Communication
- Budget Justification (see additional information below)
- Timeline

Full Proposals include a Budget and Budget Justification statement to explain project costs in the following categories:

- *Personnel (Salaries including benefits):* Include estimates (by hours) and rate of compensation proposed for each named individual or category (e.g., graduate student). Ensure that the identified personnel and their affiliations are clearly listed. Projects with contractor support must describe how the contract work will be managed and documented to ensure that products are USGS property. Proposals utilizing USGS contracting staff must also include in the Budget Justification statement a confirmation from the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) that there is an available contract to complete the project.
- *Travel Expenses:* Specify travel requirements for project meetings, and/or conference attendance. Itemize estimated travel costs to show the number of trips required, destinations, the number of travelers and per diem rates, cost of transportation (e.g., vehicle rental), and miscellaneous expenses for each trip. Travel funds must be included for at least one representative to attend a TBD in-person meeting. Travel cannot include field data collection.
- *Other Direct Costs:* Itemize any proposed permanent equipment acquisitions ($5,000 or more) and show each estimated cost. Explain costs including publication costs, office supplies, training, etc.

- *Indirect Costs (Overhead):* Provide indirect cost rate and amount approved for each institution.

Appendices

- Required: CV(s) of Principal Investigator(s) that highlights relevance to the proposed work **(max. 2 pages each)**
- Optional: CV(s) of other collaborator(s) that highlights relevance to the proposed work **(max. 2 pages each)**
- Optional: Letters of support from USGS or outside partners indicating a clear need for this effort. Submissions may also include Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and/or letters of support indicating commitment to the longevity of the project. **(max. 1 page each)**

Data Management Planning Form

The data management planning form is included in the full proposal template. Do not change the template format. The information requested on the Data Management Planning Form helps project teams plan for data management and product communication needs. For more guidance on data management plans, see the *USGS Data Management Website*, specifically the Data Management Plan checklist. All products resulting from CDI projects must comply with the *U.S. Geological Survey Manual Chapters* on data management (502.6-502.9).

Budget Table

The budget table template is provided as a separate Microsoft Excel file. Include Personnel, Travel Expenses, and Other Direct Costs, separating the requested CDI funds (maximum $60,000) from the in-kind match (at least 30% of the request – i.e., a $60,000 request would need at least $18,000 in-kind match) as indicated in the template. Relevant overhead rates should be indicated in the first column and included in the request. If there are multiple overhead rates involved, you may need to add additional columns to the table. Contact *gs_cdi@usgs.gov* with any questions.

Additional Guidance

Do not change the page setup or fonts in the template. All pages (including appendices) must be numbered.

All graphics, photos, illustrations, tables, graphs, and charts must be specifically referenced at least once in the narrative (body) of the proposal and accompanied by a caption that describes the graphic. These count towards the total number of pages allotted. References do not count toward the page count. Failure to follow the stated guidelines will reflect negatively

on the proposal.

Step 4. Ensure the name and email of a budget analyst or AO from your Center that has reviewed your budget is documented in the space on the budget sheet.

How: Ask a member of your Center's administrative staff to review your budget and enter their name and email on the space provided in the budget sheet if approved. This step ensures that salary, overhead, and other details have been properly entered.

Should the project be selected for award, all CDI funds will be transferred to the lead PI's USGS cost center through a change of allocation. The lead PI's USGS cost center may then provide sub-awards to other collaborating organizations/cost centers. If you are not familiar with the process of distributing funds beyond your Center, please speak with a budget specialist from your Center and the CDI team at gs_cdi@usgs.gov.

IMPORTANT: CDI funds are NOT defined as "grants" and will not be treated as such by the USGS Office of Acquisitions and Grants. Please make sure your administrative team understands that these funds must follow the same requisition deadlines and funding policies of the usual appropriated funds we receive in the USGS, if you do receive funds for your CDI Proposal.

When: Ideally, several days before the submission deadline of Wednesday, **February 4, 2026**, at 5 pm ET, in case you have questions for the CDI team at gs_cdi@usgs.gov.

Step 5. Submit your information and upload your full proposal file and budget file using the submission form that will be linked on the 2026 Proposals SharePoint site.

How: The submission form will be linked on the main *2026 Proposals SharePoint page for you to upload and submit your full proposal files*.

When: Ideally, several days before the submission deadline of Wednesday, **February 4, 2026**, at 5 pm ET, in case you have questions for the CDI team at gs_cdi@usgs.gov.

Appendix A – CDI Science Support Framework (SSF)

The Community for Data Integration (CDI) represents a dynamic aggregation of multiple communities of practice, focused on the advancement of scientific data and information management and integration capabilities across the USGS and external organizations.

Since 2009, CDI has funded a variety of projects that support the overarching goal of data integration. USGS and other researchers conduct monitoring, assessment, and research activities that generate data assets. Through the application of business, computational, and analytic processes and technologies, these data assets are converted into information that contributes to our understanding of the Earth's physical and biological systems. This is the context within which data management and integration occur and where the CDI operates (Fig. 1).

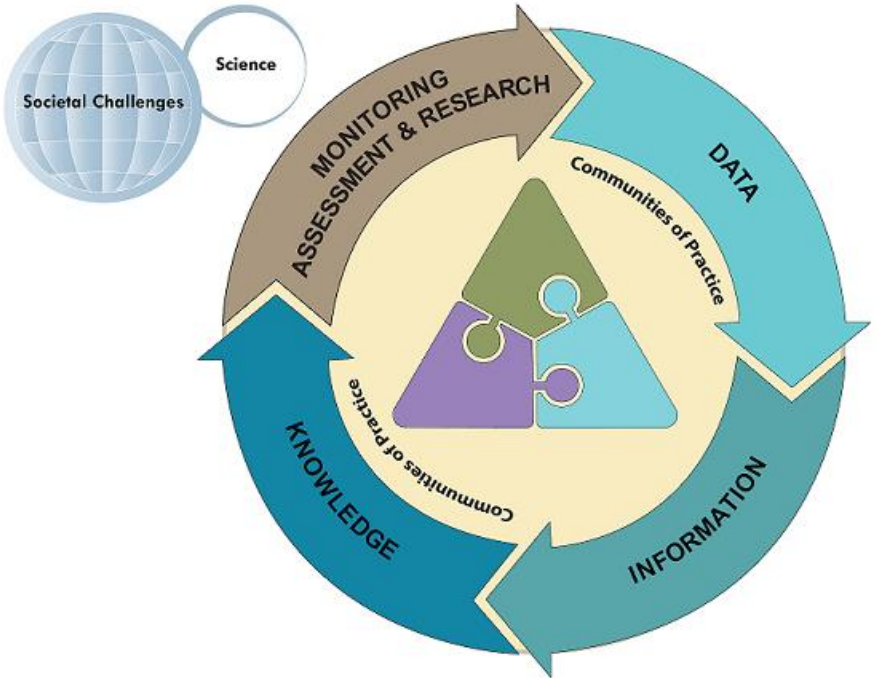

Figure 1: Overview of CDI Operational Context

Communities of practice include scientists, the CDI as a whole, CDI collaboration areas, external partners, and the human network of scientific domain collaborators.

Computational tools and services include applications, Web services, data discovery tools, models, semantic services and tools, infrastructure, data brokers, and visualization tools.

Management, policy, and standards include data stewardship, the implementation of the Science Data Lifecycle, knowledge management, data standards, governance, and policy.

Data and information assets include persistent archives, data registries, catalogs, data, metadata, derived information products, knowledge bases, and vocabularies/ontologies.

The CDI SSF (Fig. 2) provides a conceptual architecture that illustrates how the CDI contributes to Bureau-level data integration efforts; and defines how current and future CDI projects fit within the framework.

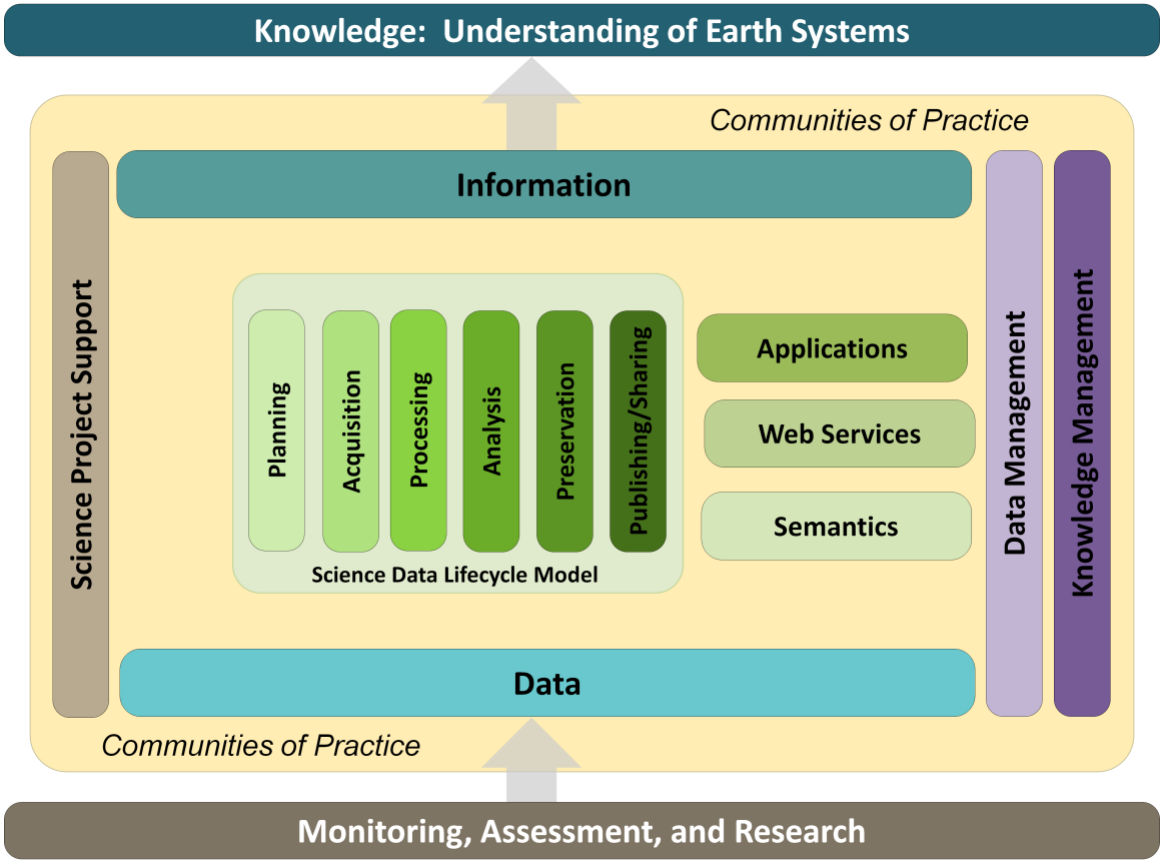

Figure 2: CDI Science Support Framework

USGS Data Assets Flow through the CDI Science Support Framework. USGS data assets flow vertically through the SSF from a base of monitoring, assessment, and research through the Science Data Lifecycle, applications, Web services, and semantics. The assets are transformed into information products that benefit from data and knowledge management and also increase knowledge and understanding of the Earth's physical and biological systems. Data assets flow horizontally through the SSF from science project support to data and knowledge management.

The horizontal elements in the SSF represent the "what" of the CDI: products and tools that contribute to the advancement of scientific data and lead to the development of knowledge and understanding of the Earth's systems.

The vertical elements in the SSF represent the "how" of the CDI: the processes, the implementation of standards and best practices, and the interactions among people, data, and technology used to achieve data integration.

Individual Framework element descriptions:

Science Inputs (brown elements)

***Monitoring, Assessment, & Research*:** USGS scientists conduct monitoring, assessment, and research that generate data assets. Through the application of business, computational, and analytical processes and technologies, these assets are converted into information products that can be shared with other researchers, stakeholders, and citizens to increase our knowledge and understanding of

the Earth's physical and biological systems.

Science Project Support: Successful science projects encompass a range of activities represented in the Data Lifecycle. At each step in the cycle, researchers and data stewards rely on an array of sophisticated tools and services for data, information and knowledge discovery, acquisition, integration, management, and sharing.

Communities of Practice (tan element)

Communities of practice are the foundation for CDI and all its products – the communities of people working towards the goal of advancing scientific data and information management and data integration across the USGS.

Data & Information Assets (blue elements)

USGS assets include **Data** (e.g., raw data, databases, and linked open data (RDF[1])); **Information** or derived/interpreted information products (e.g., published or shared maps, reports, datasets); and **Knowledge** of all types and in all forms — recorded, organized, and preserved in the form of artifacts. Knowledge can be improved, shared across groups, organizations, and domains, and reused to support learning and research.

Computational Tools & Services (green elements)

Science Data Lifecycle include tools and services that move data through the lifecycle, human and machine interactions, and interactions with data through technology.

Detailed descriptions of the Science Data Lifecycle:

- **Planning** – A documented sequence of intended actions to identify and secure resources and gather, maintain, secure, and utilize data assets.
- **Acquisition** – The series of actions for collecting or adding to data assets.
- **Processing** – A series of actions or steps performed on data to verify, organize, transform, integrate, and extract data in an appropriate output form for subsequent use.
- **Analysis** – A series of actions and methods performed on data that help describe facts, detect patterns, develop explanations, and test hypotheses.
- **Preservation** – Actions and procedures to keep data for some period of time; to set data aside for future use.
- **Publishing/Sharing** – To prepare and issue, or to disseminate data or information products.

Semantics convert raw data into data that can be interpreted by machines: Machine Readable Metadata, Semantic Mediation for Data Integration & Discovery, Ontologies/Vocabularies, and World Wide Web Consortium Standards.

Web Services include machine to machine data exchange, SOAP,[2] REST,[3] SPARQL[4] EndPoints, and other protocols and services.

Applications include human readable data services and user interfaces to data driven applications.

Management, Policy, & Standards (purple elements)

Data Management includes data and metadata standards and policies and occurs in all phases of the Data Lifecycle from scientific research to finished information products.

Knowledge Management involves the creation, standardized documentation, and organization of knowledge using tools such as SKOS[5] Vocabularies and information modeling, resulting in the formation of knowledge bases.

[1] Resource Description Framework
[2] Simple Object Access Protocol
[3] Representational State Transfer
[4] SPARQL Protocol and RDF Query Language
[5] Simple Knowledge Organization System

Appendix B – CDI RFP Staff and Contacts

The CDI is supported by the U.S. Geological Survey Core Science Systems Mission Area and the Office of the Associate Chief Information Officer.

We encourage proposers to get in touch with relevant CDI contacts to discuss their proposals:

CDI Coordinator for the Request for Proposals

- Leslie Hsu (lhsu@usgs.gov)

CDI Facilitation Team

- CDI Inquiries, GS (gs_cdi@usgs.gov)

CDI Collaboration Area leads may have specific suggestions or contacts for their focus topic (for example, data management, software development, data visualization, imagery data). All CDI Collaboration Areas and contacts can be accessed at *https://www.usgs.gov/centers/cdi/about/collaboration-areas*.