THE FUNDING NAVIGATOR MODEL

THE CHALLENGE
Estimates suggest that water systems must invest nearly $1 trillion dollars to repair and replace infrastructure over the next 25 years. There are many state and federal programs to help finance these investments: on average, states have 27 different programs to assist water systems. Although the need far exceeds available assistance, many programs are difficult to access and underutilized.

Why is there a mismatch between the need and use of funds? Water systems largely shoulder the burden of developing projects, finding funding sources, and complying with program requirements. Navigating these complex processes can overwhelm water systems, especially those with limited capacity, who typically serve small and low-resourced communities. Feeling overwhelmed, systems may never get started.

Only 7% of water systems received assistance from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund—the largest program—in the past decade.

93% Received assistance
7% Did not receive assistance

THE ROLE OF A NAVIGATOR

A NAVIGATOR COULD HELP
A Funding Navigator, an expert who understands the obstacles systems face and how to overcome them, could help water systems secure financing and be their advocate. Rather than parsing the complexities on their own, systems would only need to know to call the Navigator who would connect them to assistance providers, engineers, and environmental scientists to find funding, complete designs, conduct environmental assessments, and other requirements.

By shifting the burden away from water systems, a Navigator would help communities with the greatest need access assistance and build the project pipelines of funding agencies to increase the use of funds.

The Funding Navigator Model follows successful examples in other sectors.

Real estate brokers help homebuyers choose a lender, find a home, schedule an inspection, and make a purchase.

Water systems only occasionally need the expertise and resources to finance infrastructure. Turning to an expert that helps many systems is efficient.

For more information, visit the SRF switchboard or contact:
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