

**Notice of Funding Opportunity
Summary Information**

Federal Agency Name:	U.S. Department of Transportation (US DOT) Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Grants Management Office (GMO); MC-BG 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE West Building Washington, DC 20590
Funding Opportunity Title:	Commercial Driver's License Program Implementation
Announcement Type:	Initial
Funding Opportunity Number:	FM-CDL-21-001
Assistance Listing Number:	20.232
Key Date – Application Due Date:	Monday, March 15, 2021 5:00 p.m. EST
Point of Contact:	Financial/Application concerns: Montika Brooks (202) 366-8980 montika.brooks@dot.gov Programmatic concerns: Wendy Cunningham (360) 481-4485 wendy.cunningham@dot.gov

SECTION A – PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1. Overview and Authorizing Statutes and Regulations

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) announces the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Commercial Driver's License Program Implementation (CDLPI) financial assistance program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), Funding Opportunity Number FM-CDL-21-001, to solicit applications from State and local governments, and other persons and organizations representing government agencies that support CDLPI activities.

The FY 2021 CDLPI program is authorized by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, Pub. L. No. 114-94, §§ 5101 and 5104 (2015), as extended by the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021 and Other Extensions Act (2020) (P.L. 116-159), and is codified at 49 U.S.C. § 31313, with appropriations authorized under 49 U.S.C. § 31104. The FAST Act, as extended, authorized \$33,200,000 in CDLPI grant funding in FY 2021, and FMCSA anticipates awarding approximately \$32,702,000, after the 1.5 percent administrative takedown amount of \$498,000.

2. CDLPI Goals and Objectives

Relevant Assistance Listings include 20.232.

The FMCSA's mission is to reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities involving large trucks and buses. In support of this mission, FMCSA partners with commercial driver's license (CDL) stakeholders including, but not limited to, State Driver Licensing Agencies (SDLAs), commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers and employers, the U.S. Armed Forces, State court officers, and multi-State partnerships.

The CDLPI financial assistance program objective is to provide financial assistance to States and other eligible entities to aid participation in the National CDL program. The ultimate goal of the National CDL Program supports the Department's strategic goals and FMCSA's mission by ensuring that only qualified drivers are eligible to receive and retain a CDL. The National CDL program focuses on the concept that each driver has only one driving record and only one licensing document, commonly referred to as "One Driver — One License — One Record." Further, the National CDL program requires States to to conduct knowledge and skills testing before issuing a Commercial Learner's Permit (CLP) and/or CDL; to maintain a complete and accurate driver history record for anyone who obtains a CLP and/or CDL; and to impose driver disqualifications as appropriate.

FMCSA provides financial assistance under the CDLPI financial assistance program to States to achieve compliance with FMCSA regulations concerning driver's license standards and programs. In addition, FMCSA provides financial assistance to oether entities capable of exuecting national projects that aid States in their cimpliance efforts and that will improve the success and consistency of the National CDL Program.

CDLPI grant awards are in alignment with the following U.S. Department of Transportation's strategic goals:

- i. **SAFETY:** Reduce transportation-related fatalities and serious injuries across the transportation system.
- ii. **INFRASTRUCTURE:** Invest in infrastructure to ensure safety, mobility and accessibility and to stimulate economic growth, productivity, and competitiveness for American workers and businesses.
- iii. **INNOVATION:** Lead in the development and deployment of innovative practices and technologies that improve the safety and performance of the Nation's transportation system.
- iv. **ACCOUNTABILITY:** Serve the Nation with reduced regulatory burden and greater efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability.

This NOFO provides important information about the FY 2021 CDLPI program activities/projects and guidance for preparing and submitting a grant application. The FMCSA will award grants under this announcement in two separate categories: the CDLPI Basic Grants and CDLPI High Priority/Emerging Issues Grants.

3. CDLPI Award Performance Goals

Applicants should include expected performance goals related to the national priorities under subsection 4.

i. Baseline Data

FMCSA will measure the success of a CDLPI grant application's performance goals by examining data available in the State Compliance Records Enterprise System (SCORE), available Commercial Driver's License Information System (CDLIS) reports, driver history reports, and any other data reported by the applicant.

ii. Performance Indicators

FMCSA will also measure whether a CDLPI grant award meets the performance goals outlined in the application by assessing performance indicators. Specific performance indicators may vary based on the national priorities related to the award under subsection 4. If applicable, such performance indicators are more specifically addressed under section 4 of this section.

In general, performance indicators for successful CDLPI grant award projects may include, but are not limited to:

- a. **Master Compliance:** Activities implemented under this award address a State's compliance with Federal CDL regulations.

- b. Timeliness:** Activities conducted under the CDLPI award allows disqualifications, suspensions, downgrades to be issued by the State in a timely manner, which will allow unsafe drivers to be removed from service.
- c. Innovative Approach:** CDLPI grant award activities provide a novel technique or approach (program design, use of technology assets, etc.) to benefit national CDL safety and/or improve safety data quality.
- d. Data Quality:** CDLPI activities provide the opportunity for accurate and complete driver history records.

4. National Priority Descriptions

CDLPI financial assistance funds are awarded through a competitive grant process and no assurance of funding is implied, nor should it be inferred.

All applications must support a public purpose. The FMCSA may not award grant funding to individuals for personal gain, such as obtaining the specialized training required for CDL licensing. The FMCSA will not award grant funding to any private business for profit or direct financial gain that does not provide benefit to the National CDL Program, such as purchasing a new tractor-trailer for a driving school. The FMCSA is prohibited under 49 U.S.C. § 31313(b) from providing grant funds for the purchase, rent, or lease of land or buildings.

Unless indicated otherwise, references to the CDLPI grant program priorities include both Basic and High Priority/Emerging Issues activities/projects, with details for each type of CDLPI grant priority focus area explained later in this section.

- i. CDLPI Basic Projects** are only applicable to SDLAs. Applications should support the development, implementation, and maintenance of all or part of the CDL program or that have a direct impact on a State's compliance with the provisions of 49 CFR parts 383 and 384.
- ii. CDLPI High Priority/Emerging Issues Projects** are applicable for implementation by States, local governments, and other entities capable of executing national projects that aid States in their compliance efforts and improving the National CDL Program.

i. CDLPI Basic Projects

a. General

Proposed projects must either support the development, implementation, and maintenance of all or part of the CDL program, or have a direct impact on a State's compliance with the provisions of 49 CFR parts 383 and 384.

The CDLPI grant program is not intended to supplement ongoing operational costs of State CDL programs. Its primary purpose is to assist States in achieving and sustaining compliance with the provisions of 49 CFR parts 383 and 384. For this reason, funding for annually recurring State administrative costs receives a lower priority than funding associated with compliance issues or innovative CDL program improvements.

b. CDLPI Basic Grants eligible for 100 Percent Federal Funding

FMCSA will reimburse 100 percent of total project costs supporting the implementation of rulemakings and/or activities that directly impact a State's compliance with the CDL program. Applicants must provide in each project the 49 CFR part citation that supports the project's compliance initiatives:

- 1)** Applications for projects to achieve or maintain compliance with FMCSA rulemakings. Projects include: implementation of the Entry-Level Driver Training (ELDT) requirements; and implementation of the disqualifications associated with human trafficking felony convictions.
- 2)** Applications that support a State's correction and mitigation of its CDL regulatory compliance findings. Projects include: support for correcting the SDLA's open findings and proposed strategies, which should be described in the CDL Program Self-Assessment section of the application.
- 3)** Applications that support an SDLA's data improvements and timeliness. As the foundation for the entire CDL program, the accuracy, completeness, and timeliness of all CDL data is essential to the program's success. The FMCSA encourages applications for funding to achieve and sustain the highest possible quality of all CDL data. Projects include: correcting all broken and missing Commercial Driver's License Information System (CDLIS) pointers, submitting convictions within 10 days, and correcting CDLIS transaction errors timely.
- 4)** Applications that support an SDLA's partnership efforts that promote efforts that lead to substantial SDLA compliance with 49 CFR parts 383 and 384. The FMCSA will give priority to proposals for multi-jurisdictional partnerships or collaboration with other entities. Projects include:
 - A)** Partnerships among several States to resolve compliance issues that are common among the partner States;
 - B)** Partnerships between SDLAs, law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and/or court clerks (broadly: the criminal justice community) within the same State to improve quality and timeliness of conviction reporting or to increase outreach to courts on CDL disqualifications and/or masking and diversion;
 - C)** Partnerships among SDLAs and other non-Federal stakeholders that lead to substantial compliance and deliver multi-jurisdictional and cross functional workshops that include courts, law enforcement, SDLAs, and other interested stakeholders; or
 - D)** Partnerships that involve several States to compare facial images, identify driver data, or identify duplicate driver applications to combat fraud.

c. CDLPI Basic Grants eligible for 85 Percent Federal Funding

FMCSA will fund the following projects at 85 percent Federal funding:

- 1) Applications to support sustained CDL statutory compliance projects. Projects that will enable States to achieve and/or sustain full compliance in the case of a State that is making a good faith effort toward substantial compliance with the requirements in 49 U.S.C. §§ 31311, to improve the implementation of its CDL program.
- 2) Applications for an SDLA's operation and maintenance (O&M) projects. The CDLPI grant program is not intended to supplement ongoing operational costs of State CDL programs. Its primary purpose is to assist States in achieving and sustaining compliance with the provisions of 49 CFR parts 383 and 384. For this reason, funding for annually recurring State administrative costs receives a lower priority than funding associated with compliance issues or innovative CDL program improvements. Projects include: kiosk and tablet operation and maintenance; skills testing site improvements; and software licensing and IT maintenance agreements.
- 3) Applications for projects combatting human trafficking. As provided in 49 U.S.C. § 31313(a)(3)(E), FMCSA will prioritize grant applications that support the recognition, prevention, and reporting of human trafficking.

ii. CDLPI High Priority/Emerging Issues Cooperative Agreements and Grants

a. General

States, local governments, and other entities capable of executing national projects that aid States in their compliance efforts and improve the National CDL Program are eligible to apply for the priorities listed below.

b. CDLPI High Priority/Emerging Issues Cooperative Agreements and Grants eligible for 100 Percent Federal Funding

The following projects are eligible for 100 percent Federal funding, and will be given consideration for funding if: project activities are directly connected to regulatory compliance (must provide the specific regulatory references) that will improve SDLA's compliance with 49 CFR parts 383 and 384; and must provide performance data benchmarks and goals, not anecdotal, to support how project activities will increase SDLA's compliance. Otherwise, applications will be considered for 85 percent Federal funding participation.

- 1) Applications that provide a project plan to conduct a systematic review of a State's CDL program with recommended improvement actions to enable the State to support its Annual State Certification of

Compliance as required by 384.305. The projects are intended to strengthen the States' compliance with 49 CFR parts 383 and 384, by analyzing the State's performance in one or more of the following three major review areas: Operational, Data Reconciliation, and Legal Sufficiency.

A) Operational Review may include evaluating the SDLA's process workflows for: licensure, convictions and withdrawals, electronic and other processing actions; CDLIS helpdesk or equivalent and fraud detection; and processing communications between judiciary and SDLAs.

B) Data Reconciliation Review may include a detailed review of the data processing capabilities to confirm that every conviction has been accounted for in the driver history record, and the proper disqualification has been applied.

C) Legal Sufficiency Review that analyzes a State's legal authority to implement 49 CFR parts 383 and 384.

Projects include: an SDLA seeking to engage an internal State auditing team or an outside entity, e.g. auditing firm, other technical experts, or an eligible entity, who can demonstrate that a State or multiple States have committed to be subject to an evaluation by the applicant. The project must acknowledge that the State or multiple States have agreed to be evaluated in any or all of the three major review areas listed above by the applying applicant.

2) Applications requesting funding that will benefit the National CDL Program by improving compliance through proven tools or developing new tools that can be utilized by SDLAs and other partners that have a direct impact on CDL compliance. Projects include:

A) Providing new or proven training and/or technical assistance to SDLAs or other CDL stakeholders including courts and law enforcement;

B) Facilitating the timeliness, accuracy, and completeness of CDL data exchange between judiciaries and SDLAs; or

C) Offering direct guidance or consultation to CDL stakeholders on best practices on court management systems that improve the timeliness and data quality of all CDL/CLP holder's convictions from the judiciary to the SDLA's driver history records (must submit a cost allocation plan required to document the benefit received to the CDL compliance).

3) Applications for enhancing court expertise. Projects that enhance the expertise of court officers in prosecuting, adjudicating, and transmitting CDL violations. Projects include: providing training on the prevention of masking CDL related offenses, and ensuring that felony convictions for CDL/CLP holders are provided to the SDLAs for proper adjudication.

4) Applications that facilitate the detection and prevention of fraud in the CDL process. Projects may include, but are not limited to, training, issuing, testing, recordkeeping, and data reporting.

5) Applications that support hosting meetings and conferences to address CDL compliance issues among the SDLAs.

A) Projects proposed under this priority must include: 1) a detailed budget; 2) a timeline for completion of the plan's components; and 3) a detailed plan for execution.

B) The detailed plan for execution must include: 1) venue selection, 2) assistance with attendee hotel reservations, 3) development of the meeting's agenda in consultation with other entities, as deemed appropriate, 4) on-site support during the meeting, and 5) post-meeting requirements.

C) Post-meeting requirements include, but are not limited to: 1) preparing a final report that includes a general overview of the meeting's successes and areas for improvement, 2) a list of attendees, 3) attendee feedback, 4) minutes from the meeting's sessions, 5) accounting for all expenses, and 6) a debriefing.

c. CDLPI High Priority/Emerging Issues Cooperative Agreements and Grants eligible for 85 Percent Federal Funding

Applications requesting project funding that will support an innovative approach to include:

1) Reduce the CDL skills testing delays;

2) Implement an employer notification system (ENS) with potential benefit to the National CDL Program; or

3) Human trafficking outreach projects that do not duplicate the purpose of other Federal funding source(s).

iii. Reminders for FY 2021

- a. Applicants must state whether the project is located in a qualified opportunity zone designated pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 1400Z-1.

- b.** Submit budget information in whole numbers only. Block 18 of the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) and all fields of the Budget Information form (SF-424A) should be reflected in whole dollars ONLY.
- c.** Applications should include a detailed budget narrative and a budget justification broken out by individual objectives. Capture each objective separately in column A (Grant Program Function or Activity) of Section A of the SF-424A. These same grant program function(s) or activities should be reflected in Section B-Budget Categories as indicated on row 6. If more than five projects are being proposed, please use a continuation page for the SF-424A.

SECTION B – FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. Funding and Number of Awards

The FMCSA anticipates making approximately 50 awards totaling \$32,702,000.

2. Type of Award

Awards under this NOFO will be issued as a grant or cooperative agreement. The FMCSA will determine the appropriate award type based on the proposed project and the degree of Federal involvement.

These award types are for new FMCSA awards only. Applications for renewal or supplementation of existing awards are not eligible.

3. Period of Performance

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. § 31104(f)(5), awarded funding is available for the fiscal year of award and the four succeeding years, but may be awarded for a shorter period of time. The period of performance for CDLPI grants will be the date range designated in Block 4 of the Notice of Grant Award. NOTE: When requesting a period of performance on the SF-424 application form, applicants should carefully consider how long it will take to complete the grant's activities and objectives. The start date should be no later than the last day of the current fiscal year, September 30, 2021.

4. Degree of Federal Involvement

i. Cooperative Agreement

In accordance with 31 U.S.C. § 6305, FMCSA will award a cooperative agreement when substantial involvement between FMCSA and the recipient is anticipated when carrying out the activity outlined in the Notice of Grant Agreement. The FMCSA will outline the substantial involvement at the time of award in the Notice of Grant Agreement (e.g., the degree to which FMCSA employees are directing the performance or implementation of the award program).

In general, substantial involvement includes, but is not limited to:

- a.** Project initiation meeting to establish broad objectives and timetables to complete activities as provided in the original application.
- b.** Quarterly scheduled calls to discuss project progress and potential road blocks;
- c.** Joint development and prior approval of education materials, reports, etc. as listed in the original application and part of an approved project.

- d. Coordination of FMCSA involvement in outreach and other activities relating to the publication of materials (including but not limited to the reference and use of FMCSA/DOT logos).

Under a cooperative agreement, FMCSA agrees to assign professionally qualified staff to serve as a liaison between the recipient and FMCSA local offices when event coordination is needed; provide technical assistance to the recipient; assist with the exchange of ideas and information as necessary and permissible; and other actions relating to the monitoring of performance activities under this award.

The recipient also agrees to designate a project manager or key point of contact to work with FMCSA and act as a liaison between the awardee and the Federal Government; and comply with all terms and conditions set forth in this agreement.

The FMCSA will further outline the nature of Federal involvement at the time of award and include additional details, as relevant, in the award documentation.

ii. Grant

Substantial involvement is not expected between FMCSA and the recipient when carrying out the activity outlined in the agreement. The FMCSA provides financial assistance, technical expertise, and oversight. Recipients provide the effort and expertise necessary to carry out the approved activities to improve CMV safety. Recipients are responsible for achieving the work described in their grant award, complying with the grant requirements laid out in the grant award and Terms and Conditions, the local administration of the grant, and monitoring and oversight of any sub-recipients or sub-contractors.

SECTION C – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The following section includes the applicants eligible for award.

i. States

To be eligible for a Basic CDLPI Category Grant, States must:

- a.** Assume responsibility for adopting and administering State safety laws and regulations that are compatible with the Federal CDL requirements of 49 CFR parts 383 and 384;
- b.** Address outstanding findings discovered during Annual Program Reviews and Skills Testing Reviews;
- c.** Comply with the requirements of related rulemakings, such as the CDL Testing and CLP Standards Final Rule and the Medical Examiner's Certification Integration Final Rule. The FMCSA may make a grant to a State under this program only if it complies with or is making a good faith effort toward substantial compliance with the requirements of 49 U.S.C. § 31311; and
- d.** As a condition of the grant per 49 U.S.C. 31106(c)(2), States must provide FMCSA with access to all State licensing status and driver history records via an electronic information system, subject to 18 U.S.C. § 2721.

At its discretion, FMCSA will consider applications received from SDLAs to be for Basic CDLPI grant funding unless the application specifically indicates otherwise in the application.

ii. Non-State Organizations

Applications received from non-State organizations will be considered for High Priority/Emerging Issues grant funding. Some of these awards may be issued as cooperative agreements and applications must include all required documents. In addition, the applications must clearly describe the anticipated level and nature of FMCSA participation and the responsibilities of each partner to the agreement until the grant or cooperative agreement is closed.

The FMCSA must approve the development and execution of training to the courts and law enforcement to ensure no duplication of efforts, since there are other entities that service or support similar objectives with the courts and law enforcement. Applicants must consider FMCSA's involvement in its grant applications. Also, FMCSA will ensure project activities are dispersed and presented at locations or available to locations that will have the biggest benefit for the costs and resources available by region.

The FMCSA must approve the development of resources, such as desk manuals, cheat sheets, best practices, and webpages, that are to be used by other entities. This will

ensure the content is coordinated, approved, and does not conflict other guidance provided or resources funded by FMCSA.

2. Cost-Sharing and Matching Requirements

Unless otherwise stated, effective FY 2021, no match will be required for projects that have a direct impact on SDLA compliance with 49 CFR parts 383 and 384. Other projects will require a 15 percent match of the total project costs for applicants/subrecipients. See Section A(4) of this NOFO for project descriptions with match requirements.

Applicants will be required to submit in their budget a description of the match costs, if applicable. Any eligible type of cost included in the approved budget may be used as match, and recipients may vary the costs used as match from voucher to voucher, provided those costs were included in the approved budget. Costs that have not been approved by FMCSA as part of the project's budget may not be used as match.

Cash, in-kind and third-party contributions are acceptable in meeting the matching share if they represent necessary, reasonable, allowable, and allocable costs as established by 2 CFR part 200, and under FMCSA policy applying 2 CFR part 200.

Cost matching and cost sharing must be in compliance with 2 CFR part 200.

SECTION D – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

Potential applicants may obtain all forms included in this Notice at www.grants.gov.

If you require paper copies of materials, you may request copies at:

Email: FMCSA_GrantMgmtHelpdesk@dot.gov

Telephone: (202) 366-0621 (Grant Management Help Desk)

Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
Grants Management Office (MC-BG)
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE, West Building
Washington, DC 20590

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

The application package must contain the elements listed below to be considered for an award.

i. Formatting

The application must follow the format and limitation stated below:

- a.** Application must be prepared on 8 1/2 x 11-inch format.
- b.** Margins (Top, Bottom, Right and Left) no smaller than 1” on all pages. (Header and Footer are allowed in the margins).
- c.** Times New Roman 12 pt. font must be used for all text, including tables and graphs.
- d.** Application must be submitted in a format readable by Microsoft (MS) Word, Excel, or in text-searchable PDF formats (as applicable).
- e.** The application narrative is limited to 35 total pages. FMCSA will not read or consider any materials beyond the specified page limit in the application review process. NOTE: The 35 total page limit will apply to this section only. Submission of documentation and forms described in Appendix A will not count against the application page limit.
- f.** The application package must contain the elements listed below and all documentation described in Appendix A to be considered for an award, Appendix B contains examples for formatting purposes only, but are not required to be used.

ii. Brief Introduction – 5-page maximum

Include a description of the goal(s) of the application and the applicable program priority(s) met by the application's projects. Include in this introduction specific information about the outputs the application proposes to achieve. For each goal identified, the applicant must provide a problem statement, performance objective, program activity plan, and performance measurement plan.

iii. For SDLA Applicants Only: CDL Program Self-Assessment (Program Overview) – 5-page maximum

Applications from SDLAs must include a CDL program self-assessment, which may be included as part of the project's program overview or project plan; a separate, stand-alone document is not required. This requirement applies to SDLAs only. Applications that fail to include the required information will be considered incomplete and risk disqualification.

The Program Overview is a summary of key elements of the applicant's program and must include the following three components:

- a. A list of all open findings in the State Compliance Records Enterprise (SCORE) System, including the finding's citation and a brief description; the reason for the finding; the proposed resolution; and the expected date by which the finding will be closed.
- b. A list of all open CDLPI grant awards, including the award number, award amount, and purpose; progress made to date in achieving the award's objectives; remaining unexpended funding; the expected date of completion; *and how the application's requested funding supports those grants without duplicating their costs or activities.*
- c. The total number of noncommercial licenses and the total number of CLPs and CDLs issued to date and annually, listed separately by type of CLP or CDL.

iv. Problem Statement – 5-page maximum

Provide a qualitative description of the identified problem. Include details on the data used to identify the problem and to establish the baseline (include data source, date, and explain how the applicant collects, maintains, and analyzes the data). Data should support proposed project(s). Example: *The Applicant proposes to implement strategies that remove barriers to compliance and improve customer confidence to ensure accuracy, completeness, and timeliness of CDL data and to sustain a status of zero open findings in SCORE. Specifically, this application requests funding to expand the existing suite of online services to add identification of CDL duplicates, driver address changes, license reinstatement, and calendar reminders about the approaching expiration of the driver's current medical certificate and/or medical variances. A successful pilot at the Applicant's expense has confirmed that this approach reduces the potential for fraud and for unqualified drivers being issued a CDL.*

v. **Performance Objective – 5-page maximum**

Provide a description of the applicant's quantifiable goal related to the above problem statement. This can be measured in numbers, percentages, or other forms that accurately measure the **outputs and outcomes** the applicant anticipates will result from implementing the strategies and activities proposed. Example: *This application's performance objective is strengthening CDL program control and oversight to ensure continued compliance with all current program requirements by purchasing and installing 15 Motion Computer Scoring Tablets; this technology will limit each examiner to a unique ID, and will use GPS to record and log the comprehensiveness and thoroughness of the required CDL road test. These capabilities are both considered best practices in detecting and preventing fraud.*

vi. **Program Activity Plan – 5-page maximum**

Provide a description of the activities the applicant believes will help mitigate the problem. Description should include details such as number and frequency of activities. Example: *Expanding the program to automate pre-trip, basic control skills, and road test scoring for all tester/examiners conducting 50 or more CDL skills tests annually by purchasing 15 tablets, providing training in using the equipment, and coordinating with the vendor to ensure that test results can be successfully transmitted.*

vii. **Performance Measurement Plan – 5-page maximum**

Provide a description of how the applicant will measure progress towards the performance objective goal, such as quantifiable and measurable outputs (hours, carrier contacts, inspections, etc.) and in terms of performance outcomes. The measure must include specific benchmarks that can be reported on in the quarterly progress report, if practicable, or as annual outcomes. Example: *The Applicant will monitor and report on the number and percentage of mid-to-high volume examiners whose tests are performed using automated scoring equipment, and will increase the number of unscheduled examiner audits by 10 percent as compared to the previous 12-month period. The Applicant will provide status updates through quarterly progress and financial reports. The Applicant will also provide a final report that includes a process evaluation describing how the project was conducted and how it met the desired objectives.*

viii. **Budget Narrative and SF-424 and SF-424A Information – 5-page maximum for Budget Narrative**

A budget narrative is a description, by budget category (object class) that details the costs necessary to complete the proposed projects. A well-written budget narrative ensures that the applicant has properly documented proposed costs. The level of detail should be sufficient to justify the funding requested. Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the sample budget narrative format included in [Appendix B](#). In order to allow reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of all costs, applications should include a detailed budget narrative and a budget justification broken out by individual objectives.

Ensure that each project has its own budget narrative that matches the SF-424A Budget Categories Columns for each project. All costs in the budget narrative, SF-424 and SF-424A **must be rounded to the nearest whole dollar amount**. DO NOT include cents for Federal or State share.

The budget narrative should reflect the allocability of project activities to the grant. Budgets should reflect the appropriate Federal share and State match amounts, as stated under the priorities in subsection (A)(4). Exceeding the required State match will not favorably influence the evaluation of an application. FMCSA may adjust the applicant's budget or adjust funding to reflect the appropriate match.

For instructions on completing the SF-424 and SF-424A, please go to Grants.gov, <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>

- a. **SF-424, Field 18 - Box (a)** – Estimated funding must be completed. It must contain the amount of Federal funding requested (i.e., 85 percent or 100 percent). Box (b) must contain the required 15 percent match, if the project is eligible for 85 percent Federal funding. If the project is eligible for 100 percent Federal funding, then enter “0” in Box (b). Box (g) should equal the total project amount, which is the sum of boxes (a) and (b). The value of in-kind contributions should be included on the appropriate lines, as applicable.
- b. **SF-424A - Section A – Budget Summary** shows the 85 percent Federal share, 15 percent non-Federal share, or the 100 percent Federal share, and the total cost per project. Section A must be completed.
- c. **Section B – Budget Categories** captures total amount per object class categories, both federally funded and matching share, as applicable. In the column headings (1) through (4), enter the titles, that match narrative title, for each of the proposed projects. **If five or more projects are proposed, download an additional SF-424A from Grants.gov.** Please note, the SF-424A covers the life of the project costs, and not just the first year (as stipulated in the SF-424A instructions). Section B must be completed.

ix. **Requirements When One or More Projects are Proposed**

This section highlights requirements for application packages proposing one or more projects.

A project consists of one or more activities that work towards achieving defined goals and objectives. If an applicant chooses to propose multiple CDLPI projects within a single application, each application must contain separate and distinct project narratives, budget narratives, line item budgets, and titles for each project proposed within that application package.

When an application contains multiple projects, each project must include the following sections in consecutive order: Brief Introduction, Problem Statement, Performance

Objectives, Project Activity Plan, Performance Measurement Plan, Monitoring and Reporting Plan, and Budget Narrative. For example, in an application containing multiple projects, Project 1 would include the above sections in consecutive order, followed by Project 2, which would also include the above sections in consecutive order.

3. Sam.Gov requirement

The applicant must:

- i. Be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting an application at <https://www.sam.gov>; and
- ii. Provide a valid Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number on the SF-424. If you do not have a DUNS number, you can get one free through the D&B website: <https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do>.

The applicant must maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application under consideration. To remain registered in the SAM database after the initial registration, the applicant is required to review and update the registration at least every 12 months from the date of initial registration or subsequently update its information in the SAM database to ensure it is current, accurate, and complete.

If an applicant has not fully complied with these requirements by the time FMCSA is ready to make a Federal award, FMCSA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

4. Submission Dates and Times

i. Deadline

Unsolicited applications will not be accepted. **FULL AND COMPLETE APPLICATIONS FOR Commercial Driver's License Program Implementation ARE Monday, March 15, 2021 by 5:00 p.m. EST.** Once Grants.gov has received your submission, you will receive email messages to advise you of the progress of your application through the system. Over the next two business days, you should receive two emails: 1) confirming application receipt by the Grants.gov system; and 2) indicating that the application has either been successfully validated by Grants.gov prior to transmission to FMCSA or has been rejected due to errors. The applicant assumes responsibility for a timely and complete submission. Click [here](#) for more information.

ii. Consideration of Applications

Only applicants who comply with all submission deadlines described in this NOFO and electronically submit valid applications through Grants.gov will be eligible for

consideration of award. Applicants are strongly encouraged to make submissions in advance of the deadline.

iii. **Late Applications**

The FMCSA will not consider a late application except under extraordinary circumstances. A late application will only be accepted if there is a large scale natural disaster or a Grants.gov system issue that threatens the timely submission of a grant application. Problems with computer systems at the applicant's organization, failure to follow the application instructions or failure to submit or complete the program application or complete required registrations by the submission deadline are not considered system issues.

5. **Intergovernmental Review**

All applications under the Notice are subject to Executive Order (E.O.) 12372. The applicants with a Single Point of Contact (SPOC), and therefore a requirement to comply with E.O. 12372 are listed on the Office of Management and Budget's website at: www.whitehouse.gov/omb.

6. **Funding Restrictions**

The CDLPI grant program is not intended to supplement ongoing operational costs of State CDL programs. Its primary purpose is to assist States in achieving and sustaining compliance with the provisions of 49 CFR parts 383 and 384.

Pre-award costs are not eligible for reimbursement. All costs must be allowable, allocable, reasonable, and necessary to achieve the stated goals, and must comply with the cost principles in 2 CFR part 200. Compliance with these requirements is the responsibility of the recipient of Federal funds. Costs must also be consistently applied and documented. These standards are described in the applicable cost principles and administrative requirements in 2 CFR §§ 200.400 through 200.475; note that § 200.405 includes requirements for allocating costs, §§ 200.416-200.417 include Special Considerations for States, Local Governments, and Indian Tribes, and §§ 200.418-200.419 include Special Considerations for Institutions of Higher Education. Contact FMCSA's Grants Management Office for additional information.

The lease of land or buildings is **not** an allowable cost.

Failure to adhere to these requirements may result in reimbursements under the award being deemed improper and subsequently disallowed.

Eligible CDLPI grant program costs include, but are not limited to:

- i. **Personnel expenses**, including recruitment and screening, training, salaries and fringe benefits, and supervision. Personnel expenses included in an organization's indirect cost rate must not be included as a direct cost in the grant budget.

- ii. **Equipment and travel expenses**, including but not limited to per diem expenses directly related to compliance with the CDL regulations, vehicles (very limited and must be fully supported within project proposal), uniforms, supplies, materials, communications equipment, vehicle maintenance, fuel, and oil (very limited and must be fully supported within project proposal).
- iii. **Clerical and administrative expenses**, to the extent necessary and directly attributable to the grant project and not already included in the indirect cost pool.
- iv. **Expenses related to the improvement of real property** (e.g., refurbishing of paved areas for conducting off-road skills tests) that do not materially increase the value of the property.
- v. **Expenses related to data acquisition, storage, and analysis** that are not being requested under any other FMCSA grant program's funding, that are specifically identifiable as program-related, and that are intended to improve efficiency. The proposal should clearly demonstrate the extent to which these costs will directly benefit the grant program. Cost allocation plan(s) should be attached, as applicable, to support the direct benefit to CDL compliance, as supported in the project proposal.

Note: Applications requesting information technology funding, such as upgrades or modifications to existing software or equipment, are subject to review by FMCSA's Office of Research and Information Technology.

The FMCSA will not approve reimbursement requests for indirect costs if an approved indirect cost rate (IDC) agreement is not in force for the period of time that the indirect cost expenses are incurred.

If claiming indirect cost charges, the recipient must include an active approved IDC agreement with the application submitted for funding. Should the recipient fail to provide an approved agreement during the pre-award phase and a grant is awarded, the recipient will have 90 days from the date of award acceptance to provide a copy of the IDC agreement. If we do not receive the required documentation within the allocated time frame, the recipient will not be reimbursed for indirect cost charges for that fiscal year. Once an approved rate is provided to FMCSA, the recipient will then, be allowed to claim indirect cost in the following fiscal year of the award. 2 CFR § 200.414(c).

Any non-Federal entity that does not have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate, except for those non-Federal entities described in appendix VII of 2 CFR part 200, may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs, which may be used indefinitely. No documentation is required to justify the 10% de minimis indirect cost rate. 2 CFR § 200.414(f).

The FMCSA will not approve reimbursement requests for fringe benefit expenses calculated by using a rate if there was not a fringe benefit rate approved by the recipient's

Federal cognizant agency for indirect costs in place for the period of time the fringe benefit expenses were incurred. In the absence of such a federally-approved fringe rate agreement, FMCSA will approve reimbursement of fringe benefit costs based on actual costs incurred.

All FMCSA grant programs are cost reimbursable, which means that grant recipients must first expend their own money before vouchering by submitting an invoice to FMCSA for costs associated with approved activities identified in the grant agreement. Recipients will be reimbursed by FMCSA for actual costs incurred, subject to any required match, provided that the costs are reasonable, approved, allowable, and allocable in accordance with the OMB regulations and FMCSA policy, within the approved budget, and supported by documentation. The recipients must request reimbursement at least once each quarter.

Recipients must submit requests for reimbursement electronically through the Delphi eInvoicing System (iSupplier). Additional information is available at:
<http://www.transportation.gov/cfo/delphi-einvoicing-system>.

FMCSA will not provide reimbursement for salary-related bonus payments, either as a direct or indirect cost. Bonus costs are not an allowable expense under FMCSA awards. 2 CFR part 200, Subpart E: 2 CFR §§ 200.403 – 200.405.

7. Other Submission Requirements

Applications must be submitted electronically via <https://www.grants.gov> as described above in this section. In the event of system problems or technical difficulties with the application submittal, please call at 1-800-518-4726 or e-mail at support@grants.gov 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (closed on Federal holidays). To submit an application through *Grants.gov*, applicants must:

- i. Create a username and password.
- ii. Establish an E-Business point of contact (POC) in order to response to the registration emails.
- iii. Establish at least one Authorized Organization Representative (AOR).

Please note the registration process in Grants.gov usually takes 2-4 business weeks to complete. FMCSA will not consider late applications due to failure to register or comply with Grants.gov requirements.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

i. Eligibility Criteria

FMCSA will first screen all applications received by the due date to determine if the application is eligible. In addition to the eligibility criteria under Section C, FMCSA will review the application for the following criteria.

Eligibility Criteria:
1. Was the application submitted by the deadline?
2. Was the application submitted by an eligible applicant?
3. Is this application a duplicate submission as confirmed by the applicant?
4. Was the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) completed?
5. Was the Budget information for Non-Construction form (SF-424A) completed?
6. Was the Assurances for Non-Construction form (SF-424B) completed?
7. Was the grants.gov Certification Regarding Lobbying form completed?
8. Was the Disclosure of Lobbying activities form (SF-LLL) completed?
9. Do the Key Contact forms include PI/PD and ADO contact information?
10. Was a current Indirect Cost Rate agreement included in the application?
11. Does the application include a complete Budget Narrative?
12. Does the application include a complete Project Narrative?

ii. Merit Evaluation Criteria

FMCSA subject matter experts will review all eligible applications using the following Merit Evaluation Criteria: Technical Merit Criteria; Budget Cost Analysis Criteria; Program-Specific Criteria; Past Performance Criteria; and Other Review Information. All of these criteria are further explained below.

a. Technical Merit

FMCSA subject matter experts will review all eligible applications using the following Merit Evaluation Criteria:

- 1) The proposed project(s) meets the CDL program's priorities and statutory requirements and will likely achieve success within the proposed period of performance;
- 2) The application includes clearly identified performance goals and measurements, supported by data, as appropriate, and includes benchmarks and timelines;
- 3) The application includes costs that are linked to the project's goals and are reasonable and necessary for the project's success;

- 4) The proposed approach is reasonable in scope, addresses existing and emerging commercial driver's license safety issues, and is likely to be successful;
- 5) The project includes an innovative approach with potential benefit to the nationwide CDLPI program, if applicable; and has a project plan that provides a good description of the innovative approach and clearly articulates the benefit(s) to the National CDL program;
- 6) The application provides a description of how projects and tasks have been effectively managed in the past;
- 7) The application includes clearly identified performance goal(s) and measurements;
- 8) The application includes a monitoring and evaluation component that indicates how the recipient will continuously evaluate performance and outcomes and make adjustment, if necessary, which enables FMCSA to monitor performance and progress toward successful completion.

b. Budget Review/Cost Analysis Criteria

This criteria involves the budget: whether costs are allowable in accordance with Federal grant requirements, including the appropriateness and reasonableness of the budget estimate and the resources to be dedicated to the project; and the reasonableness and feasibility of the schedule relative to the application timeline.

The budget should describe specific activities that support the objective(s) of the project plan/program. FMCSA considers whether budget components such as staffing, equipment, training, and travel are clearly linked to the project's goal(s) and are necessary to adequately compensate, equip, train, and enable personnel to conduct the activities included in the project plan.

The budget evaluation helps identify project-related risks that must be considered prior to recommendation, in addition to those risks arising from technical uncertainty. FMCSA will evaluate applications and other information, including, but not limited to:

- 1) Elements of work included in the application have associated budget costs and, conversely, all elements in the applicant's budget have corresponding work elements included in the application;
- 2) Budget costs are allowable, allocable, necessary and reasonable per 2 CFR part 200;

- 3) Cost in a particular cost category has been properly identified as allowable, with the necessary detail for its use, and are not duplicative to the other budget line items;
- 4) The appropriate match is documented, as applicable;
- 5) All equipment, training, and travel components are clearly linked to the project goal and are necessary to adequately equip, train, and enable personnel to conduct the activities included in the project plan;
- 6) A debarment and suspension review that included a review of the applicant's administrative capability self-certification form and a check against the records in SAM (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System). Please note that an applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM;
- 7) Any applicant included comments, which FMCSA will review, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR § 200.206 (Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants); and
- 8) An evaluation of the applicant's Single Audit in accordance with the Single Audit Act. The FMCSA may, at its discretion, request further information and/or conduct an audit to confirm compliance as indicated on the SF-LLL – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form, as provided for in the United States Code or the Code of Federal Regulations.

c. Program-Specific Criteria

The application must carry out a CDL project that reflects the program's priorities and statutory requirements that will likely achieve successful completion within the award's period of performance.

This relates to program-specific policy areas such as statutory references, published policy documents, etc., that may factor into an award recommendation. CDLPI program-specific factors may include but are not limited to:

- 1) The extent to which the project supports the NOFO priorities;
- 2) The extent to which the project will close a compliance finding identified in a APR, STR, or another written correspondence to the SDLA;

- 3) The extent to which a project complements the applicant's existing program or enhances its capabilities;
- 4) The extent to which a project supports the applicant's potential for continued success in achieving and maintaining compliance with all CDL program requirements currently in effect or scheduled to take effect in the near future; and
- 5) The extent to which a project demonstrates an innovative approach with potential benefit to the nationwide CDLPI program, if applicable.

d. Past Performance Criteria

This review provides information that is considered a possible indicator of future performance. Applicants that have previously received FMCSA grant funding will be evaluated in part on their ability to complete prior year awards on time, their compliance with those grant terms and conditions, including review of any financial and performance quarterly reports and the results of any FMCSA grant monitoring activities, to include budget execution, original budget vs. final budget, and unexpended balances.

Applicants that have not previously received grant funding from FMCSA are not subject to this review, and their applications will not be eliminated from funding consideration on this basis.

FMCSA will evaluate applications and past performance to determine the extent to which the applicant had any problems related to programmatic management and whether any issues have been noted related to project management, compatibility, adherence to project timelines, programmatic reporting, etc.

Based upon monitoring conducted by a grantor, reviewers will determine if there are issues with any organizational, financial, or business management practices, such as vouchering, financial reporting, cost allocation, debt rating, or Subpart F (formerly A-133) Single Audit findings.

Based on the applicant's past performance, FMCSA will determine how well the application demonstrates that the:

- 1) Proposed project/program is reasonable in scope and likely to succeed within the period of performance;
- 2) Proposed expenditures are reasonable and necessary to conduct the proposed projects;
- 3) Milestones and timelines allow performance to be monitored; and
- 4) Current project tasks are successfully performed and managed (e.g., within

budget and on schedule).

e. Other Review Information

After applying the above criteria, FMCSA will take into account the following key Departmental objectives.

- 1) Supporting economic vitality at the national and regional level;
- 2) Utilizing alternative funding sources and innovative financing models to attract non-Federal sources of infrastructure investment;
- 3) Accounting for the life-cycle costs of the project to promote the state of good repair;
- 4) Using innovative approaches to improve safety and expedite project delivery;
- 5) Holding grant recipients accountable for their performance and achieving specific, measurable outcomes identified by grant applicants;
- 6) FMCSA may also consider whether a project is located in a qualified opportunity zone designated pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 1400Z-1;
- 7) Consistent with the Department's R.O.U.T.E.S. Initiative (<https://www.transportation.gov/rural>), the Department recognizes that rural transportation networks face unique challenges. To the extent that those challenges are reflected in the merit criteria listed in this section, the Department will consider how the activities proposed in the application will address those challenges, regardless of the geographic location of those activities; and
- 8) The Department will review and consider applications for funding pursuant to this NOFO in accordance with the President's September 2, 2020 memorandum, entitled *Memorandum on Reviewing Funding to State and Local Government Recipients of Federal Funds that Are Permitting Anarchy, Violence, and Destruction in American Cities*, consistent with guidance from the Office of Management and Budget and the Attorney General and with all applicable laws.

2. Review and Selection Process

i. Review Process

FMCSA will review all eligible applications received before the application deadline. The review and selection process will consist of Intake/Eligibility Criteria review, a Technical Review Panel phase, a Program Office Review phase, and a Selection Process. During the Technical Review Panel phase, FMCSA technical experts evaluate and analyze applications applying the evaluation criteria. During the Program Office Review, the Program Office will consider the Technical Review Panel evaluation, review the

application against the criteria, and apply ratings, consistent with the descriptions in this NOFO. The Program Office will recommend initial selection of projects for the FMCSA Administrator's review. Finally, the FMCSA Administrator will select awards for the Secretary's review and approval.

ii. **Ratings**

FMCSA prioritizes applications using the ratings shown below based on the applicability of the merit criteria and other preferences to the application.

- a. **Highly Responsive**: Applicant fully addresses all aspects of the criterion, convincingly demonstrates that it will meet the Government's performance requirements, and demonstrates minimal or no weaknesses.
- b. **Responsive**: Applicant addresses most aspects of the criterion and demonstrates the ability to meet the Government's performance requirements but contains weaknesses. These weaknesses may be addressed by recommending the award and including a specific programmatic or administrative post-award term and condition or a reduction to requested funding. Applicant otherwise fully addresses all aspects of the criterion and demonstrates the likelihood of meeting the Government's expectations and requirements.
- c. **Not Responsive**: Applicant does not sufficiently address the criterion and/or failed to submit required documentation. For example, the application is missing a budget, the project narrative lacks a clearly defined problem statement, missing objectives/goals, etc. The information that the applicant has presented indicates a strong likelihood of failure to meet the Government's requirements and/or adherence to application submission requirements.

iii. **Applicant Information**

As determined necessary to support the evaluation and selection process, FMCSA may conduct discussions with applicants to clarify elements of the technical and budget applications, seek additional information as to whether the project can be completed with a reduced award, and request additional detailed and itemized cost information.

3. **Additional Information**

Prior to award, each selected applicant will be subject to a risk assessment, as required by 2 CFR § 200.206. Depending on the level and severity of FMCSA's risk assessment findings, FMCSA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive the award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant. The FMCSA may also impose additional grant award terms and conditions above its customary general terms and conditions.

The risk assessment is conducted in several parts:

- i.** A suspension and debarment review that included a review of the applicant's administrative capability self-certification form and a check against the records in SAM (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System).

 - a.** An applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.
- ii.** The FMCSA will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR § 200.206 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants; and
- iii.** An evaluation of the applicant's Single Audit in accordance with the Single Audit Act, if applicable. The FMCSA may, at its discretion, request further information and/or conduct an audit to confirm compliance as indicated on the SF-LLL – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form, as provided for in the United States Code or the Code of Federal Regulations.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

Following the evaluation outlined in Section E, the Notice of Grant Agreement (NGA) signed by the FMCSA Grant Officer is the authorizing financial assistance document, and will be sent through GrantSolutions. It must be accepted by the recipient before the end of FY 2021. The FMCSA may approve all or partial funding of a grant application. The NGA issued to the recipient will specify whether the award is a grant or a cooperative agreement and will include any special award terms and conditions, if applicable.

After the application review process, FMCSA may need to contact the applicant with additional questions or for clarification of the application's components. The FMCSA also reserves the right to determine the amount of awarded funding, including but not limited to factors such as reductions in the scope of work, funding level, period, or method of support, prior to recommending any project for funding. Although the process is intended to be collaborative, FMCSA reserves the right to make final decisions on all awards. If selected for funding, applicants may be required to submit a supplemental budget or project narrative based on a partial or modified grant recommendation. The FMCSA expects to contact applicants, if necessary, during the spring of 2021. This contact between applicants and FMCSA does not constitute any assurance that funding will be awarded.

Applicants chosen for grant funding are formally notified electronically by the FMCSA grant management system (www.grantsolutions.gov) before the grant's execution. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email. The FMCSA cannot award grants or release information concerning applications recommended for funding until approval is obtained from the Secretary of Transportation. Further, FMCSA cannot award grants until the enactment of authorizing legislation, an appropriations act, budget authority, and apportionment from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The FMCSA may issue partial funding awards up to the level authorized.

Acceptance of the grant award constitutes the recipient's agreement to comply with all applicable statutes, regulations, executive orders, OMB circulars, and terms and conditions of the award, including the reporting requirements shown below.

The FMCSA will send a letter to notify those who were not funded with suggestions for how applications can be improved for the next grant cycle. The FMCSA does not have an appeals process for unsuccessful applications for discretionary grant funds.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All awards will be administered pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards found in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted by DOT at 2 CFR part 1201 and FMCSA statutes and regulations.

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to DUNS, SAM, and administrative capability, can be found in the Grants.gov application package under the “Related Documents” tab. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review all documents when preparing applications. Contact the POC listed in the overview of the funding notification if you have questions on these provisions.

3. Reporting

The grant terms and conditions outline the reporting requirements that the recipient must meet after award. Reporting responsibilities include quarterly program performance reports using the Performance Progress Report (SF-PPR) and quarterly financial status using the Federal Financial Report (SF-FFR, also known as the SF-425). Recipients must submit financial and performance reports electronically through GrantSolutions; contact the primary or secondary point of contact listed in the overview of the funding notification for additional information.

Additional quarterly report information and other required forms and templates are available at: <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/mission/grants/grantee-training#pre-award>.

If the Federal share of any Federal award may include more than \$10,000,000 over the period of performance financial assistance recipients must comply with the post-award reporting requirements reflected in Appendix XII of 2 CFR part 200.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

For questions about this NOFO, please contact FMCSA's Grants Management Office as listed below:

Email: FMCSA_GrantMgmtHelpdesk@dot.gov

Telephone: (202) 366-0621 (Grants Management Help Desk)

Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
Grants Management Office (MC-BG),
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE, West Building,
Washington, DC 20590

Office hours: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Eastern Time
Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

H. OTHER INFORMATION

This NOFO is intended for informational purposes and reflects current planning. If there is any inconsistency between the information contained in this NOFO and the terms of any resulting funding agreement, the terms of the funding agreement are controlling. Additionally, FMCSA may make changes or additions to this NOFO. All changes will be announced through Grants.gov. We encourage you to sign up for Grants.gov emails to be notified of the changes at: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/manage-subscriptions.html>.

The FMCSA plans to conduct an informational web-based conference for all prospective applicants. During this conference, FMCSA staff will review NOFO requirements at a high level; share best practices and lessons learned; and answer questions from prospective applicants as allowed by FMCSA policy. Please check for updates at: www.grants.gov.

For a general overview of the grants management cycle, FMCSA has developed a new grant training resource for its applicants, available at: <https://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/StatePrograms/GrantManagement.aspx>.

The following attachments have been added to Grants.gov under this announcement. These attachments are available in Grants.gov under the “Related Documents” tab.

- [Appendix A](#): Application Package Requirements Checklist
- [Appendix B](#): Budget Narrative Guidance

APPENDIX A – APPLICATION PACKAGE REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST

Below is a non-exhaustive list of documents necessary for a responsive grant application. This list is intended to assist applicants in compiling their application. However, because the required documents may differ slightly based on the nature of the grant application, applicants should not rely solely on this checklist and must still read the entire NOFO to ensure that they have included all required documents.

FMCSA reserves the right to request additional documentation or information to confirm compliance with applicable laws.

Document Name	Document Description and Location Information	Submit in:
Brief Introduction	Include a description of the goal(s) of the application and the applicable program priority(s) met by the application's projects.	Grants.gov
Problem Statement	A quantitative description of the identified problem. Include details on the data used to identify the problem and to establish the baseline.	Grants.gov
Performance Objective	A description of the applicant's quantifiable goal related to the above problem statement.	Grants.gov
Program Activity Plan	A description of the activities the applicant believes will help mitigate the problem.	Grants.gov
Performance Measurement Plan	A description of how the applicant will measure progress towards the performance objective goal, such as quantifiable and measurable outputs.	Grants.gov
Budget Narrative	A budget narrative is a description, by budget category (object class) that details the costs necessary to complete the proposed projects.	Grants.gov
SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance	Required standard application form for all requests for Federal assistance. Form requests contact information for: 1) Lead Principal Investigator or Program Director (program/project manager) [enter in Box 8f]; and 2) Authorized Representative (AR) Official (authorized signer) [enter in AR section following Box 21]. Available in the Grants.gov application package.	Grants.gov

SF-424A Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs	Required standard budget form for requests for Federal assistance. Available in the Grants.gov application package.	Grants.gov
SF-424B Assurances for Non-Construction Programs	Required standard assurances form associated with accepting Federal assistance funds. This document indicates that the organization is in substantial compliance with various programs, regulations, and Federal laws for a non-construction program. Available in the Grants.gov application package.	Grants.gov
Grants.gov Lobbying Form	Required form that allows organizations to indicate that they do not engage in lobbying activities. Available in the Grants.gov application package.	Grants.gov
SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable)	Standard form to report their lobbying activities if applicable. Available in the Grants.gov application package.	Grants.gov
Key Contacts Form	Required form requests contact information for: 1) Additional Persons for the role of Authorized Representative Official (authorized signer); 2) Additional Persons for the role of Principal Investigator or Program Director (program/project manager); and 3) the lead role of Financial Official (Grants Manager). NOTE: If more than one individual is designated in the same role, one individual must be identified as primary. Available in the Grants.gov application package.	Grants.gov
Attachment Form	Form used to submit supplemental attachments to support the grant application. Available in the Grants.gov application package.	Grants.gov

<p>Indirect Cost Rate Agreement</p>	<p>Organization's signed current approved indirect cost rate from the cognizant Federal agency or letter of request to cognizant agency for rate establishment or adjustment. If claiming Indirect cost charges, the recipient must include an active approved Indirect Cost agreement with the application submitted for funding. Should the recipient fail to provide an approved agreement during the pre-award phase and a grant is awarded, the grant recipient will have 90 days from the date of award acceptance to provide a copy of the IDC agreement. If we do not receive the required documentation within the allocated time frame, the recipient will not be reimbursed for Indirect charges for that fiscal year. Once an approved rate is provided to FMCSA, the recipient will then be allowed to claim Indirect cost in the following fiscal year of the award. 2 CFR § 200.414(c).</p> <p>Any non-Federal entity that does not have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate, except for those non-Federal entities described in appendix VII to 2 CFR part 200, paragraph D.1.b, may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs, which may be used indefinitely. No documentation is required to justify the 10% de minimis indirect cost rate. 2 CFR § 200.414(f).</p>	<p>Grants.gov</p>
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APPENDIX B – BUDGET NARRATIVE GUIDANCE

What is a Budget Narrative?

The budget narrative explains the “what,” “how” and “why” of each line item cost to carry out grant project goals and objectives. A budget narrative explains each budget component that supports the costs of the proposed work and should describe why each budget item is required to achieve the proposed project goals and objectives. It should also explain in detail how budget costs were calculated.

The budget narrative should be clear, specific, detailed, and mathematically correct. Be sure to round all requested Federal funds and match to the nearest dollar. Please ensure the budget narrative totals match the SF-424A budget categories by project that is being requested.

The FMCSA reviews the budget narrative to confirm that costs are allowable, allocable, necessary, and reasonable. A well-developed budget narrative is also an effective management tool; a budget that doesn’t represent a project’s needs makes it difficult to recommend for funding and to assess financial performance over the life of the project. The budget narrative serves a number of critical functions:

- Describes your need for or the necessity of an expense;
- Documents how reasonable the request is and conveys your judgment as well as the feasibility of the project based on available and proposed resources;
- Helps FMCSA review high-risk cost items to determine funding; and
- Describes how much of each cost will be provided by Federal funding and how much will be contributed as match. Include this information in the narrative section for each type of cost. NOTE: The total project’s cost must reflect a 85 percent Federal contribution and a 15 percent match contribution, but which costs are used to provide the required match is at the applicant’s discretion. For this reason, no examples are shown.

What Costs are included in a Budget Narrative?

Personnel: Personnel costs are salaries for employees working directly on a grant project. Only include costs for personnel employed by your organization. Costs should be consistent with those paid for similar types of work within the organization. Individuals not employed by your organization will be classified as either a sub-recipient or contractor. See the contractual object class for additional information.

Below is a sample personnel budget narrative. The FMCSA evaluates the personnel budget narrative to determine whether the proposed number of personnel is appropriate and includes sufficient staffing to meet the project objectives. The proposed effort should be consistent with the effort required by the work plan. The labor mix should be consistent with the caliber of effort – professional/nonprofessional/clerical – required by the grant work plan. The FMCSA

also reviews the personnel budget to determine whether or not the salary ranges proposed are reasonable.

Personnel Budget Narrative					
Position(s)	# of Staff	% of Time	Work Year Hours	Hourly Rate	Total Cost
Supervisor	1	100	2,080	\$28	\$58,240
Staff member (Full-Time)	1	100	2,080	\$19.00	\$39,520
Staff member (Part-Time)	10	50	2,080	\$19.00	\$197,600
Total Cost for Personnel:					\$295,360
Total Personnel					7
<p>The Supervisor oversees activities of the project. She or he spends 100 percent of the time implementing this project, supervising staff, and conducting activities to meet the objectives of this project. Activities include: supervising daily operation of projects and staff, providing staff training/technical assistance, coordinating staff work schedule/assignments, ensuring data entry, tracking and following-up on procedures to meet quality assurance, and tracking policy to ensure compliance. There are 11 staff members (1 full-time, 10 part-time) who provide additional program support. Each is paid an hourly wage of \$19; part-time staff members will average 50 percent of their time on grant activities. The full-time staff member wages equal \$39,520 annually, with the part-time (10) staff members averaging 1,040 hours or 50 percent on grant activities @ \$19,760 per year for a cumulative total (for all 10 part-time staff members) of \$197,600.</p>					

Fringe Benefits: Fringe benefits are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees as compensation in addition to regular salaries and wages. Fringe benefits include, but are not limited to, the costs of leave (vacation, family-related, sick, or military), employee insurance, pensions, and unemployment benefit plans. The costs of fringe benefits are allowable under 2 CFR 200.431 provided that the benefits are reasonable and are required by law, non-Federal entity-employee agreement, or written policy of the non-Federal entity. The FMCSA will reimburse fringe costs only for the personnel performing grant-related duties and only for the percentage of time they devote to the project. Some helpful tips:

- Explain how the fringe benefit amount is calculated (e.g., actual fringe benefit percentages or a fringe rate approved by the Health and Human Services Statewide Cost Allocation Plan or cognizant agency). Explain what is included in the benefit package
- Do not combine the fringe benefit cost with direct salaries and wages in the personnel category.

Below is a sample fringe benefit budget narrative. Note that the personnel in the personnel budget narrative should be reflected in the fringe benefits budget narrative. The level of personnel participation (full-time or part-time) must also correspond to the fringe charged.

Sample Fringe Benefits Budget Narrative						
Position(s)	Fringe Rate	% of Time	Annual Salary	Total Cost	85% Federal Share	15% State Match
Supervisor	16.72%	100	\$58,240	\$9,738	\$8,277	\$1,461
Staff Member (full time)	16.72%	100	\$39,520	\$6,608	\$5,617	\$991
Staff Member (part-time)	16.72%	50	\$39,520	\$3,304	\$2,808	\$496
<i>Sub-Total Fringe Benefits</i>				<i>\$19,650</i>	<i>\$16,702</i>	<i>\$2,948</i>
<p>Fringe benefits include cost of health insurance, retirement, workers' compensation and unemployment benefit plans. It is calculated at the average rate of 16.72 percent as recognized by the cognizant agency. This rate is applied to the average hourly rate of \$28 per supervisor and \$19 per staff member, with a projected 2,080 hours worked annually for each. The 1 part-time staff member will average 50% working on the program or an average of 1,040 hours.</p>						

Travel: Travel costs include field work activities or travel to professional meetings. The FMCSA reviews the travel budget to ensure that amounts are reasonable based on the level of effort described in the project plan and alignment with 2 CFR 200.475. Generally speaking, FMCSA will accept in-State travel costs for routine operations as reasonable unless there is a specific reason to question them. The FMCSA evaluates out-of-State travel to ensure the trips planned are necessary to complete the scope of work (usually training or meeting attendance), and that the number of travelers is consistent with the trip's purpose. Some helpful tips:

- Include estimates for potential travel such as possible FMCSA required meetings, with estimated costs of attendance.
- Explain the reason for travel expenses for project personnel (staff training, field interviews, advisory group meeting, etc.) and, if known, identify the location/destination of travel.

- Do not include payroll, fringe, or other costs as part of the travel. For example, payroll/fringe is included in personnel and fuel costs are included in other.

Below is a sample travel budget narrative. Costs for employee attendance at conferences, such as with FMCSA, can be put into the budget without the need to break out what the daily cost will be; however, when vouchered, costs should be reported as actuals. Expenses must be auditable (i.e., backed up by actual days on the road, State per diem costs, hotel expenses, and any allowable miscellaneous costs).

Travel Cost Budget Narrative			
Purpose	# of Staff	Days	Total Cost
Routine Travel	10	10	\$4,600
San Diego Conference	15	5	\$28,410
Total Cost for Travel:			\$33,010
<p>Costs represent necessary travel funds for staff members to perform their assigned duties. Reimbursement is based upon the current State per diem and rules. The per diem rate for each day is \$46. (NOTE: Travel by contractors should be included as part of the contract's cost.)</p> <p>Training in San Diego for 15 staff members with an average cost per person of \$600 for airfare or \$9,000; \$204 state-approved per diem or \$3,060; \$290 for hotel accommodation or \$4,350; and \$800 for registration fees or \$12,000; for a total of \$28,410.</p>			

Equipment: Equipment is tangible personal property with a useful life of more than one year and a unit acquisition cost of the lesser of the capitalization threshold established by the non-Federal entity or \$5,000. The FMCSA evaluates the need for the equipment in the budget narrative (e.g., ratio of employees to equipment) and how it supports project activities. The FMCSA also evaluates the extent to which the equipment is being used to support more than one cost objective. If it does, FMCSA reviews the costs to ensure the expenses have been properly allocated. Additionally, FMCSA reviews past performance information to determine if the same equipment for the project/program was purchased in previous years. Some helpful tips: If your equipment threshold is below \$5,000, indicate that in the narrative so that FMCSA can verify why lower cost items are included in this line. Items costing less than \$5,000 each should be categorized as supplies or other, depending on the item.

- Explain the purpose and use of each item of equipment. Prorate the costs, if applicable.
- Common purchases like a computer system (when purchased as a package – keyboard, monitor, and hard drive as a single unit) are considered equipment if the total cost of each of those units exceeds the threshold. If these same items are purchased individually (not as a package) and each component is below the threshold, list these costs as supplies.

- When developing your budget, analyze the cost/benefit of purchasing versus leasing equipment, particularly high-cost items and those subject to rapid technical obsolescence. List rented or leased equipment costs in the contractual or the other object class, depending on your procurement method. See the guidance under the other object class for additional information.

Equipment Cost Budget Narrative			
Item Name	# of Items	Cost per Item	Total Cost
Vehicles	12	\$36,000	\$432,000
Total Cost for Equipment:			\$432,000
<p>The Applicant requests 12 new vehicles to perform covert monitoring as replacements for vehicles that have reached their useful life as determined by the State's vehicle replacement policy. These vehicles will only be used for grant eligible purposes and are needed to achieve the activities proposed in the application. The cost for purchasing the vehicles is approximately \$36,000 each based on the State's procurement contract.</p>			

Supplies: Supplies are tangible personal property other than equipment. The FMCSA evaluates supplies costs to ensure that enough detail is provided to enable an informed reader to understand that the cost is reasonable. For example, an applicant need not provide details on the number of paper clips that it will purchase. At the same time, FMCSA cannot accept an amount for office supplies that would equal, say, \$8,000 a year per person without further clarification. Some helpful tips:

- A good way to document supplies is to indicate the approximate expenditure of the unit as a whole (e.g., office supplies for the unit cost \$XX per month).
- Remember to include a quantity and unit cost for larger cost supply items such as computers and printers.

Supplies Cost Budget Narrative				
Item Name	# of Units/Items	Unit of Measurement	Cost per Unit	Total Cost
<i>General office supplies</i>	12	month	\$39	\$468
<i>Laptop computers</i>	12	each	\$2,000	\$24,000
<i>Sub-Total Supplies</i>				\$24,468

General office supplies include paper, printer ink, etc. for 26 staff members in the program. These 26 staff members require supplies that are estimated at \$39 per month for 12 months. Ten part-time staff members require laptop computers, which will be used only to fulfill planned activities. These staff members perform assigned duties as described in the project's narrative. There 10 part-time staff members needing laptops; the extra two laptops are requested for replacement purposes.

Contractual: A contract is a legal instrument by which a recipient purchases products or services necessary to carry out the Federal project.

The FMCSA reviews the contractual budget narrative to ensure it contains sufficient descriptive information about what specific costs (products and/or services) would be charged to the grant, a rationale for how those costs were derived, and the applicability and necessity of each to the grant.

A helpful tip: Include the name of the vendor/subrecipient, if known. If not, indicate that the selection is pending and provide an estimated timeframe by which the vendor/subrecipient will be selected. In the application, the most important component of the contractual budget narrative is the purpose of the contract/sub-grant and how the cost was estimated or derived.

Guidance for Contract Costs: A contractor is one who provides goods and services within normal business operations; provides similar goods or services to many different purchasers; normally operates in a competitive environment; provides goods or services that are ancillary (but necessary) to the operation of the Federal program. A contractor is not subject to Federal compliance requirements as a result of the grant, though similar requirements may apply for other reasons.

For example, contractual costs could include training, maintenance contracts, or other service contracts except those that belong in different object classes such as equipment or supplies (depending on your organization's policy). The term "procurement" is used to identify the process of acquiring goods and services from sources outside of the recipient organization.

When procuring property and services under a Federal award, an organization must follow the procurement standards at 2 CFR 200.317 - 200.326 and the same policies and procedures it uses for procurements using non-Federal funds. Non-competitive procurements should only be used in limited circumstances and should be a last resort.

Non-competitive procurements must comply with 2 CFR 200.320(c)..

Guidance for Subrecipient Costs: A subaward is an award provided by the recipient (also known as a pass-through entity or a prime recipient) to a sub-recipient. Characteristics of a subrecipient include that a sub-recipient's performance is measured in relation to whether objectives of a Federal program were met; a sub-recipient is responsible for programmatic decision making; is responsible for adherence to applicable Federal program requirements specified in the Federal award; and (in accordance with its agreement) uses the Federal funds to carry out a program for a public purpose specified in authorizing statute, as opposed to providing goods or services for the benefit of the pass-through entity.

A subaward may be provided through any form of legal agreement, including an agreement that the pass-through entity considers a contract. Federal regulations require that all sub-recipients obtain and maintain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and continue to maintain an active System for Award Management registration at all times during an active Federal award.

Below is a sample contractual budget narrative for contractor costs. If you intend to provide funding to another organization as a sub-award, provide a new object class budget narrative and line item budget for each sub-recipient organization.

Contractual Cost Budget Narrative	
Description of Services	Total Cost
Contract services for programming: 800 hours @ \$250	\$200,000
Total Cost for Contractual:	\$200,000
Contract services for programming include an assessment of the timeliness and quality of our data systems; in addition, the contractor oversees the development of plans to implement improvements to the system that support the State's highway safety programs. The contractor will install the necessary software and ensure that it is compatible with all existing platforms.	

Other: Other costs are costs that do not fit within any of the other object class categories. Typical costs in this category include rent for space used to conduct occasional project activities, for leases, and for printing costs. The FMCSA reviews Other costs to determine whether these costs are consistent with the proposed work plan, are necessary to complete the approved work plan, and are not duplicative of costs included in the indirect cost amount. The FMCSA also evaluates the costs to ensure that no unallowable costs, such as entertainment expenses, are included. Below is a sample Other budget narrative. Some helpful tips:

- Group Other object class costs whenever possible (i.e., communication, printing, maintenance) in the budget and explain how they support the grant activities; include a description by cost of each expense classified as Other. **NOTE:** Rental, lease and/or purchase of land or buildings is prohibited by the CDLPI statute.
- Ensure that Other costs such as professional services, audit, postage, printing, facilities expenses, and so forth are not already accounted for in either your indirect cost rate agreement or cost allocation plan.

Other Cost Budget Narrative

Item Name	# of Unit/ Items	Unit of Measurement	Cost Per Unit	Total Cost
Printing materials	1000	\$0.50	\$500	Printing materials
Total Cost for Other:				\$500
Printed materials are used during outreach activities and at national stakeholder meetings. The average cost per unit is \$0.50.				

Indirect Costs: Indirect costs are costs incurred for common or joint objectives that benefit more than one project, but are not easily or accurately allocable to more than one project. They may be administrative and/or operational. The FMCSA reviews indirect cost rates to ensure the rate is valid, calculations are correct in the budget, and that the rate is applied to the appropriate base.

Remember to include your indirect cost rate agreement with your application in Grants.gov if your project's budget will include indirect costs. If your rate will not be approved by the application due date, attach the letter of renewal or letter of request that you sent to your cognizant agency. This documentation is used as a placeholder until the rate is approved. Recipients may not receive reimbursement for indirect costs until the rate is approved.

To support the budgeted indirect costs, provide the calculations that were used to derive the amount, such as the base to which the indirect cost rate was applied, the rate, and the total amount.