



U.S. Department of Transportation

SMART Frequently Asked Questions

Potential applicants will find answers below to frequently asked questions about the SMART Grants Program.

This page has been updated to reflect the Stage 1 FY 2024 NOFO Announcement made on **May 13th, 2024. The FY24 Stage 1 SMART Grants NOFO is now open. The deadline is July 12th, 2024 at 5:00pm ET.**

[FY 2024 Stage 1 Notice of Funding Opportunity](#)

1. How was the Stage 1 FY 2024 NOFO different from the FY 2023 NOFO?

The FY 2024 NOFO is very similar to the previous year's NOFO, but includes additional clarification and help text to assist applicants, based on lessons learned from previous years. It substantively differs in a few ways, as listed below.

- USDOT anticipates this will be the final Stage 1 NOFO of the SMART Grant Program.
- Section D.2 asks applicants to provide the Lead Applicant City, State, Zip Code, and County (Questions #3, #4, #5, and #6).
- Section D.2 asks applicants to provide a One Sentence Description and provides further detail on what should be included in the Brief Project Description (Questions #14 and #15).
- Section D.2 provides further considerations for determining the Size of Community Receiving Benefit (Question #19).
- Section D.2 adds Cambridge, MA, as a potential location for required in-person meetings.
- Section E.1 asks applicant to include consideration for transportation insecurity when outlining the project's Expected Benefits (Technical Merit Criterion #3).
- Section F.3 describes the requirements of a data management plan.
- Section F.4 adds guidelines and requirements for grant recipients employing project signage and public acknowledgements.

2. What were common themes among successful SMART Grants applications?

The following are themes that appeared across applications that were selected for funding:

- Alignment with Program Structure: Stage 1 activities would result in a prototype or deployment. The proposal provides a vision for Stage 2.

- Purpose-Driven Innovation: The project targeted specific existing problems; there was a clear reason for using the chosen technology to solve the problem; the project accounted for equity and policy considerations.
- Transformational Approach: The project leveraged existing technology through demonstration projects and innovative approaches.
- Benefit to Community: The applications demonstrated a clear context for the type of project; the project was rooted in the vulnerabilities of the applicant's own transportation system.
- Alignment with Department and Program Priorities: The applications clearly articulate a rationale for expected benefits that further Departmental and Program priorities (section A, part 3 of the NOFO).

3. How should applicants create the new project location file?

- Please refer to the [SMART Grant Application Resources](#) page, where applicants will find a comprehensive guide to creating the project location file under “[Application Preparation Resources](#).”

4. What Standard Forms are required as part of the application package?

- All applicants must submit the following Standard Forms: Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424), Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A), and the Certification Regarding Lobbying form. If applicable, applicants should also complete the Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL). These forms can be found on the Valid Eval application page.
- SMART has prepared a [Job Aid for Standard Form 424](#)

Program Design and Structure

1. What is the SMART Grants Program?

- The SMART Grants Program was established to conduct demonstration projects focused on advanced smart city or community technologies and systems that will improve transportation efficiency and safety. The program seeks to fund purpose-driven innovation and focuses on building data and technology capacity and experience for State, local, and Tribal governments.

2. Is the SMART Grants Program a research program?

- No. SMART is a demonstration program. However, understanding costs and benefits of the technologies demonstrated is a goal of the program.

3. How is the SMART program structured?

- The SMART Grants Program is divided into two stages. These stages are Stage 1: Planning and Prototyping Grants and Stage 2: Implementation Grants. Only recipients of Stage 1 grants will be eligible for Stage 2 grants.

4. What is the difference between Stage 1 and Stage 2?

- During Stage 1, recipients should build internal buy-in and partnerships with stakeholders to refine and prototype their concepts, and report on results. Stakeholders can include public, private, academic, and nonprofit organizations; organized labor and workforce organizations; and community organizations and networks. At the conclusion of Stage 1, awardees should have the information to either create a fully realized implementation plan with robust performance metrics; or to make an informed decision not to proceed with the concept. Stage 1 results may uncover previously unknown institutional barriers, technical limitations, or poor performance relative to conventional solutions. USDOT anticipates that Stage 1 will award grantees up to approximately \$2 million over up to 18 months.
- Stage 2 will provide funding for projects that are designed to result in a scaled-up demonstration of the concept, integrating it with the existing transportation system, and refining the concept such that it could be replicated by others. USDOT anticipates that Stage 2 will award grantees up to approximately \$15 million over 36 months.

5. Can I apply directly to Stage 2? My organization has already completed a planning process.

- No. Only recipients of Stage 1: Planning and Prototyping Grants will be eligible for Stage 2: Implementation Grants. The program structure is based on a belief that planning, prototyping, and teambuilding are critical to advancing the state of the practice for data and technology projects in the public sector.

6. How many projects will be selected in Stage 1?

- For the FY23 funding opportunity, USDOT awarded 34 Stage 1 grants. USDOT reserves the right to make more or fewer awards upon receiving the full pool of applications and assessing the needs of the program.

7. What are minimum and maximum grant award sizes for Stage 1?

- The maximum grant award size for Stage 1 is approximately \$2 million per project. There is a minimum grant award size of \$250,000. USDOT reserves the discretion to alter the minimum and maximum award sizes upon receiving the full pool of applications and assessing the needs of the program.

8. Is there a matching funds requirement for Stage 1?

- Cost sharing or matching is not required for Stage I: Planning and Prototyping.

9. Will there be cost sharing requirements for Stage 2 Implementation Grants?

- At this point, no decision has been made about potential local match requirements for Stage 2 Implementation Grants.

10. Can an entity apply for a SMART grant at the same time that they're applying for other USDOT and federal grant funding opportunities?

- Generally, yes. We encourage applicants to leverage all available grant programs. Applicants must clearly state in their application that a similar proposal has been submitted for a separate Federal grant program. If an applicant receives multiple sources of funding for the same project, they should clearly delineate which sources fund which components or phases.

11. When will Stage 2 applications be accepted?

- USDOT anticipates multiple NOFOs for both Stage 1 and Stage 2 grants throughout the 5-year authorization of the program. Only recipients of Stage 1 grants will be eligible to apply for Stage 2 grants. USDOT anticipates releasing the first Stage 2 NOFO in CY24.

12. Will there be another opportunity to apply for a Stage 1 grant?

- No. USDOT anticipates this will be the final NOFO for Stage 1 of the SMART Grants Program as currently authorized.

13. Can I reapply this year if my project was not selected last year?

- Yes. We encourage interested applicants to reapply, developing and updating proposals as appropriate.

14. At what level of maturity should technologies be to apply for a SMART grant?

- The SMART Grants Program is a demonstration program. Technologies should be past the early research phase of development but should not yet be in widespread use in the transportation sector. This can differ across technology areas, contexts, and applications. For those familiar with [Technology Readiness Levels](#), TRL 6-8 is an approximate guide, but it is not a requirement.

15. What is the timing for Stage 1 and Stage 2 applications?

- The FY22 and FY23 NOFOs were only open to Stage 1 applications. The FY24 stage 1 NOFO is also open only to Stage 1 applications. In 2024, USDOT anticipates the first Stage 2 NOFO will be released. Only recipients of Stage 1 grants will be eligible for Stage 2 grants. Depending on the timeline, needs, and progress of each project, Stage 1 grant recipients may apply for Stage 2 in any subsequent year. Stage 1 grant recipients do not necessarily need to complete their Period of Performance before applying for Stage 2.

Eligible Applicants

1. Who is eligible to apply for a SMART grant?

- Eligible applicants for the SMART Grants Program are:
 1. a State;
 2. a political subdivision of a State;
 3. a Tribal government;
 4. a public transit agency or authority;
 5. a public toll authority;
 6. a metropolitan planning organization; and
 7. a group of 2 or more eligible entities detailed above, applying through a single lead applicant.

2. What is a political subdivision of a state?

- For the purposes of the SMART Grants Program, a political subdivision of a State is defined as a unit of government created under the authority of State law. This includes cities, towns, counties, special districts, and similar units of local government.

3. Are Tribal governments eligible to apply?

- Federally recognized Tribes are eligible recipients under the SMART Grants Program.

4. Can group applications be submitted?

- Yes. Multiple eligible entities may apply together. However, they must apply through a single lead applicant.

5. Can collaborative applications be submitted?

- Yes. Eligible entities may choose to collaborate across different regions or geographies on projects with similar characteristics, addressing similar problems and with similar technologies, potentially sharing common resources such as partnerships with industry, nonprofits, academic institutions, or community foundations. If these entities choose not to apply as a group with a single lead applicant, they should identify their application as a Collaborative Application.
 - Each organization in a Collaborative Application must submit an individual application.
 - Collaborative Applications can include any type of eligible entity.
 - Each individual application in a Collaborative Application will be evaluated on its own merits, and USDOT reserves the right to fund all, some, or none of the associated applications, with the same anticipated funding (i.e., up to \$2,000,000 per individual award).
 - Eligible entities that apply with a collaborative application may still include partners on their application.

6. I'm not sure if a group application or a collaborative application is the right fit for my project. How can I decide?

- In general, here are some points for consideration:
 - Group applications have a single lead applicant who will establish the funding relationship with USDOT. Each applicant in a collaborative application will have a single lead applicant with a funding relationship.
 - Collaborative applications will be reviewed on their own merits and selection of one application does not guarantee selection of other applications. In a group application, all participating partners would be funded through the lead applicant.
 - Group applications are appropriate for multiple eligible agencies who wish to work together on a single project. Collaborative applications are appropriate for multiple eligible agencies who wish to work together on separate projects in separate locations.

7. I don't see my type of organization listed here. Am I eligible to apply for a SMART grant?

- Only the entities listed above are eligible to apply to the SMART Grants Program. However, you may be eligible to participate as a partner on a SMART Grants proposal that is submitted by an eligible applicant.

8. Are universities and academic institutions eligible applicants?

- Universities and academic institutions are not eligible applicants. They are not considered to be political subdivisions of a State for the purposes of the SMART Grants Program. However, eligible applicants may choose to partner with universities. Notably, university transit agencies that are considered a public transit agency or authority may be eligible applicants.

9. Are public transit systems that are independent Authorities or Agencies eligible applicants?

- A provider of public transportation services that is structured as a Joint Powers Authority, independent Public Authority, or other public transit entity (e.g. subject to government control, publicly funded, or a public entity responsible for administering transit services) is considered an eligible entity.

10. What is the role of partners? Who can be a partner?

- For the purposes of the SMART Grants Program, partners are organizations that will not directly apply to the program as an eligible applicant, but they are committed to supporting a SMART Grants proposal in a meaningful way. Partners could include academic institutions, Federal organizations such as national laboratories, non-profit groups, state and local government agencies, utility providers, or private sector organizations.

- While project partners do not have to be an eligible entity, grant funds may not flow directly to an ineligible entity. The eligible entity cannot act merely as a pass-through to an ineligible entity.
- Applicants to the SMART Grants Program will be asked to include information about proposed partners within the “Key Information Questions” section of their application. Applicants may also attach Letters of Commitment from partners to their application, though this is not required. Before submitting a Letter of Commitment with an application, applicants should review the [SMART Letter\(s\) of Commitment Template](#).

11. Can applicants identify a private sector partner in their application? Do awardees need to use a full and open bidding process to select vendors?

- Applicants are welcome to identify private sector partners in the application but are not required to select vendors in advance. The services of any vendor to whom the applicant will provide SMART grant funding as part of the SMART project must be acquired consistent with the procurement standards under [2 CFR Part 200](#).
- When procuring property and services under a Federal award, a State must follow the same policies and procedures it uses for procurements from its non-Federal funds. The State will comply and ensure that every purchase order or other contract includes any clauses required. All other non-Federal entities, including subrecipients of a State, must follow the procurement standards. The non-Federal entity must have and use documented procurement procedures, consistent with State, local, and tribal laws and regulations and the standards of this section, for the acquisition of property or services required under a Federal award or subaward. The non-Federal entity's documented procurement procedures must conform to the procurement standards identified in [2 CFR Part 200](#).

12. If a contractor writes the grant application on behalf of the applicant, can the contractor also receive funds from the grant award?

- Yes, a contractor could assist in writing the grant application and then assist in the execution of the grant agreement. After the grant has been awarded, procurement of any contractors should adhere to the procurement standards set forth in [2 CFR 200.317 through 200.330](#) and any applicable Federal requirements such as the cost principles set forth in 2 CFR 200 subpart E, including [2 CFR 200.401](#), and [2 CFR 200.403](#). For further information about procurement guidelines and associated consultant and contractor costs, review [2 CFR 200.320](#) and [2 CFR 200.430](#).

13. Can we use grant funds to pay for consultants or contractors?

- Hiring contractors or consultants to directly support the execution of the grant award and its activities is an eligible cost. Expenses related to contracting with these individuals or organizations must take place during the grant award and be reasonable, allocable, and necessary to accomplish the grant objectives/scope of work, unless authorized by DOT in writing after DOT's announcement of FY 2022 SMART grant awards.
- Expenses incurred prior to the grant award, e.g., costs to develop a grant application, are not eligible for reimbursement.

- Contractor costs must adhere to applicable Federal requirements such as [2 CFR 200.400](#), [2 CFR 200.401](#), and [2 CFR 200.403](#). For further information about procurement guidelines and associated consultant and contractor costs, review [2 CFR 200.320](#) and [2 CFR 200.430](#).

14. Are U.S. territories and organizations located in U.S. territories eligible applicants?

- Yes, U.S. territories are eligible applicants, as are other eligible applicants located within U.S. territories.

15. Is my organization considered a political subdivision of a state?

- Under the SMART Grants Program, entities may be a political subdivision of a State if they are a unit of government created under the authority of State law. This may include cities, towns, counties, associations of government (AOGs), councils of government (COGs), and regional councils.

16. Can a single applicant submit multiple applications or submit an application as the lead and as part of a group application?

- There is no limit on the number of SMART applications that an eligible applicant can submit in one year. Additionally, there is no limit on the amount of funding that an eligible applicant can receive throughout the duration of the SMART program, with the exception of geographic diversity requirements. However, applications should focus on specific eligible projects.
- Each application will be reviewed independently. Final award decisions are at the discretion of the Secretary who “will consider contributions to geographic diversity among grant recipients, including the need for balancing the needs of rural communities, midsized communities, and large communities.” The Secretary also may consider benefits to economically disadvantaged communities, Federally recognized Tribes, and geographic and organizational diversity when selecting SMART Grants Program awards.
- There is no limit on the number of awards a single eligible applicant can be awarded over the life of the SMART program.

17. Can international agencies or vendors be partners?

- Yes, depending on the international entity. Please note the restrictions, including but not limited to those set forth in 2 CFR 200.216, on recipients flowing down federal grant funding to certain foreign entities.

18. What documents are needed from Tribal Governments to qualify?

- A Tribe can self-certify that it is a Federally recognized Tribe. USDOT will confirm Federally recognized Tribes by reviewing the Bureau of Indian Affairs’ latest list of Federally recognized Tribes.

19. Will a Group be classified (large, medium, rural) by the lead agency or the combined population numbers of all eligible entities within the Group?

- A group application will be classified based on the size of the community the project will primarily benefit. It could be the classification of the lead applicant or an eligible partner applicant depending on the individual application. Group applicants are welcome to highlight the size of the community they believe will be the primary beneficiary of the project, and DOT evaluators will make the final determination as part of the evaluation process, DOT does not expect that it will aggregate the populations of the eligible entities.

20. If a group application is made up of eligible applicants with different populations, how will the community be categorized?

- A group application will be categorized based on the size of the community that the project will primarily benefit. It could be the classification of the lead applicant or an eligible partner applicant depending on the individual application. Group applicants are welcome to highlight the size of the community they believe will be the primary beneficiary of the project, and DOT evaluators will make the final determination as part of the evaluation process. DOT does not expect that it will aggregate the populations of the eligible entities.

Eligible Projects and Costs

1. What are eligible projects?

- As stated in BIL Section 25005 e.1, projects that demonstrate one or more of the following technology areas are eligible under SMART:
- Coordinated Automation— Use of automated transportation and autonomous vehicles while working to minimize the impact on the accessibility of any other user group or mode of travel.
- Connected Vehicles— Vehicles that send and receive information regarding vehicle movements in the network and use vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-everything communications to provide advanced and reliable connectivity.
- Intelligent, Sensor-based Infrastructure— Deployment and use of a collective intelligent infrastructure that allows sensors to collect and report real-time data to inform everyday transportation-related operations and performance.
- Systems Integration— Integration of intelligent transportation systems with other existing systems and other advanced transportation technologies.
- Commerce Delivery and Logistics— Innovative data and technological solutions supporting efficient goods movement, such as connected vehicle probe data, road weather data, or global positioning data to improve on-time pickup and delivery, improved travel time reliability, reduced fuel consumption and emissions, and reduced labor and vehicle maintenance costs.

- Leveraging Use of Innovative Aviation Technology— Leveraging the use of innovative aviation technologies, such as unmanned aircraft systems, to support transportation safety and efficiencies, including traffic monitoring and infrastructure inspection.
- Smart Grid— Developing a programmable and efficient energy transmission and distribution system to support the adoption or expansion of energy capture, electric vehicle deployment, or freight or commercial fleet fuel efficiency.
- Smart Technology Traffic Signals— Improving the active management and functioning of traffic signals, including through:
 - Use of automated traffic signal performance measures;
 - Implementing strategies, activities, and projects that support active management of traffic signal operations, including through optimization of corridor timing; improved vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle detection at traffic signals; or the use of connected vehicle technologies;
 - Replacement of outdated traffic signals; or
 - For an eligible entity serving a population of less than 500,000, paying the costs of temporary staffing hours dedicated to updating traffic signal technology.

2. For projects in the Coordinated Automation technology area, how should an applicant interpret the definition of accessibility in the following language from the NOFO? “Use of automated transportation and autonomous vehicles while working to minimize the impact on the accessibility of any other user group or mode of travel.”

- This language originates directly from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. When referring to coordinated automation, the SMART program interprets this to include both accessibility for travelers with disabilities and general multi-modal accessibility (i.e. access to transportation and destinations).

3. Are C-V2X technologies eligible if they are consistent with relevant waivers established in relation to FCC's "final rules" for ET Docket No. 19-138?

- Projects that use communications technologies must either 1) use Vehicle-to-Everything (V2X) services that utilize Cellular Vehicle-to-Everything (C-V2X) based technology designed to operate within the 30 MHz of spectrum (5.895 - 5.925 GHz) that are consistent with the rules established in waivers associated with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ET Docket No. 19-138 and future Report and Orders effective at the time when the Department selects projects for funding under the FY 2023 SMART Grants Program or 2) leverage other communications technologies that can support V2X services and operate in spectrum outside of the 5.895 -5.925 GHz range.

4. Can a project address more than one technology area?

- Teams will be required to identify at least one technology area for their project, though some projects may naturally address two, three, or even four of the technology areas. For example, applicants proposing an unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) project, depending on their project, may indicate that they will do work in multiple technology areas, like intelligence-based sensors; systems integration; commercial delivery and logistics; and

leveraging use of innovation and aviation technologies. However, recipients of SMART grants are not expected to seek solutions in several technology areas through one project. Applications that address multiple technology areas will not necessarily score higher during the evaluation process.

5. How mature should technologies be?

- In general, the systems and technologies proposed should be sufficiently developed such that there is good reason to anticipate public benefits from their deployment, but their application in public sector settings is not yet widespread. Proposals seeking funding for systems and technologies which are already well-established and broadly adopted will be less competitive.

6. What are eligible project costs?

- Eligible development and construction activities for grant funding in both stages, as appropriate to the proposed project, are the following:
 - development phase activities, including—
 - planning;
 - feasibility analyses;
 - revenue forecasting;
 - environmental review;
 - permitting;
 - preliminary engineering and design work;
 - systems development or information technology work; and
 - acquisition of real property (including land and improvements to land relating to an eligible project); and
 - construction phase activities, including—
 - construction;
 - reconstruction;
 - rehabilitation;
 - replacement;
 - environmental mitigation;
 - construction contingencies; and
 - acquisition of equipment, including vehicles.

7. Are there any restrictions on funding?

- A SMART grant award may not be used—
 - to reimburse any pre-award costs or application preparation costs of the SMART grant application;
 - for any traffic or parking enforcement activity; or
 - to purchase or lease a license plate reader.

8. What is included in the restriction on traffic or parking enforcement activities?

- In the context of the SMART Grants Program, prohibited activities include any enforcement activities performed by the agency responsible for enforcement (for example, a police department or a parking authority) using SMART funding. This may include activities like fines, ticketing, and towing. Additionally, projects supported by SMART funds should not include efforts to share data with the enforcing agency.
- Pursuant to the above restrictions, a project team may undertake activities that manage parking.

9. A SMART grant award may not be used to purchase or lease a license plate reader. Can SMART funds be used to procure cameras that have the capability of performing license plate recognition?

- Yes, as long as the primary purpose of the technology is not for enforcement, and that the intent upon procurement is not to support future enforcement activities.

10. What are example use cases of potential SMART Grants projects?

- [Illustrative use cases](#) have been developed to give a sense of potential projects. Applicants should note that these are not comprehensive and any eligible project that meets local needs is welcomed.

11. Can Stage 1 funding be used to expand a project that is already in progress?

- With Stage 1 Planning and Prototyping Grants, eligible applicants should focus on building out a proof-of-concept, partnerships, and capacity. You can find a full list of eligible costs in question 4 of this FAQ section.
- It is possible that funding could be used to expand a project that is already in progress, if the applicant defines and illustrates how their project is a prototype. You can refer to our [fact sheet](#), which broadly defines demonstration activities, Stage 1 activities, and eligible projects. However, please note that costs that have been incurred on a project before it receives a SMART grant will not be eligible costs for the SMART grant and therefore cannot be reimbursed.

12. Can SMART grants be used for traffic or parking enforcement activities?

- SMART grants cannot be used for any traffic or parking enforcement activity; or to purchase or lease a license plate reader.
- In general, cameras may be used so long as the primary purpose is not for license plate reading. If a camera incidentally picks up license plate number information, that is acceptable, but this information should not be used for traffic or parking enforcement activity, or for anything funded by SMART.
- If a component of the project is explicitly intended to support future enforcement activities, it is not an eligible cost for SMART and cannot be included in an eligible proposal.

13. Can a SMART grant be used for staff salaries?

- Staff costs may potentially be an eligible planning cost if essential to the purpose of the grant and consistent with the cost principles in 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart E. Please note that a staff member's salary is only eligible in direct proportion of the work hours they spend on the project. For example, if the staff member spends 50 percent of their work hours on a SMART grant project, then 50 percent of their salary could be considered an eligible expense and reimbursed with SMART funding.

Submitting the Application

1. How can I apply for the program?

- Please visit the "[How to Apply](#)" page for detailed instructions.

2. What is Valid Eval?

- Valid Eval is a third-party web-based evaluation platform used by USDOT and other federal programs to support complex evaluation programs. Applicants will submit their applications via Valid Eval.
- To register in Valid Eval, go to https://usg.valideval.com/teams/USDOT_SMART_2024/signup
- Use your email address to register. This should take approximately 10 minutes and can be done ahead of submitting your application. If you already have an account with Valid Eval you do not need to register again.

3. When is the application deadline?

- FY24 Stage 1 NOFO Applications are due on July 12th, 2024, at 5 PM ET. Late applications will not be accepted.

4. Can a third party submit an application on behalf of an eligible entity?

- Only eligible applicants may submit an application. However, third parties may assist in the preparation of an application. The services of any vendor to whom the applicant will provide SMART grant funding as part of the SMART project must be acquired consistent with the procurement standards under [2 CFR Part 200](#).

5. What are the font formatting requirements for the resumes, letters of commitment, charts, tables, figures, and footnotes?

- The Narrative and Appendices I-III should be in PDF format, with a font size of no less than 12-point Times New Roman, single-spaced, minimum 1-inch margins on all sides, and page numbers. Appendix IV should be uploaded to the application in Valid Eval as a Shapefile, GEOJSON, or KML/KMZ file.

6. Other than via Valid Eval, is there another way to access the Standard Forms?

- The Standard Forms can also be accessed through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Please note that the Standard Forms are used government-wide.
- If you having difficulties downloading the forms, including receiving an error message indicating that you need Adobe Reader 8 or higher, please follow [these instructions](#) on the Grants.gov website to troubleshoot.

7. Are maps, photos, or other figures part of the seven-page narrative?

- Yes, maps, photos, and other figures are considered part of the seven-page narrative.

8. What is the CFDA number for the Standard Forms?

- The CFDA number for SMART is 20.941. The CFDA number is the same as the Assistance Listing Number in the NOFO.

Program Awards

1. Will funding decisions reflect geographic diversity (i.e., community size)?

- Yes, for the lifetime of the program, not more than 40% of SMART Grant Program funds shall be used to primarily benefit large communities; not more than 30% shall be used to primarily benefit mid-sized communities; and not more than 30% shall be used to primarily benefit rural communities or regional partnerships.

2. What is the definition of a regional partnership?

- Per Section 25005 of division B of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the term “regional partnership” means a partnership composed of 2 or more eligible entities located in jurisdictions with a combined population that is equal to or greater than the population of any midsized community.

3. What are the definitions for rural, midsized, and large communities?

- Section 25005 of division B of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law defines rural, midsized, and large communities as:
 - Rural community - The term “rural community” means a community that is located in an area that is outside of an urbanized area (as defined in section 5302 of title 49, United States Code).
 - Midsized community - The term “midsized community” means any community that is not a large community or a rural community.
 - Large community - The term “large community” means a community with a population of not less than 400,000 individuals, as determined under the most recent annual estimate of the Bureau of the Census.

4. If a project generates revenue, would the amount be deducted from the grant award?

- No. Project revenue is a potential vehicle for scale and long-term sustainability. Recipients will keep any program income; this will be detailed in grant agreement terms.

Other

1. How can I learn more about the program?

- If you are interested in learning more about the SMART Grants Program, you can sign up for email updates. To do so, visit the SMART Grants Program website at <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SMART>, and scroll to the bottom of the page to find the sign-up form. It is located under the heading “Email Updates.”
- Briefings may be requested on behalf of eligible applicants.

2. What if my idea does not fit under the SMART Grants Program?

- USDOT offers many different Federal grants and technical assistance resources that may be able to support your idea. To learn more about additional USDOT resources, visit the DOT Navigator at <https://www.transportation.gov/dot-navigator>.

3. Who owns the technology when the project is completed?

- The recipient will own any intangible property, including intellectual property, subject to the Federal government having license to obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data produced under a Federal award; and authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data for Federal purposes. Please refer to 2 CFR 200.315 for additional detail regarding ownership of intangible property created or obtained under Federal awards.

4. How does the SMART Grants Program (SMART) differ from Advanced Transportation Technologies and Innovative Mobility Deployment (ATTIMD or ATTAIN) Grants Program?

- Listed below are several general program differences to keep in mind. However, prospective grant applicants should become familiar with each grant program to determine their interest and eligibility. Some projects may be eligible for both programs.
 - SMART is a two-stage program that requires applicants to complete Stage 1 (Planning and Prototyping). ATTIMD is a one-stage program.
 - Stage 1 of SMART does not have a match requirement. ATTIMD has a match requirement of 20%.
 - Academic institutions are not eligible to apply for SMART, but they are eligible to apply for ATTIMD.
 - SMART grants cannot be used for any traffic or parking enforcement activity. Such projects may be eligible through ATTIMD.

5. Will a Stage 1 application that includes a proposed local funding match be more competitive?

- While an applicant may provide a local funding contribution, it will not make a Stage 1 application more competitive. If the applicant submits an application with a voluntary match and their project is chosen, they will be required to provide the match as stated in their application.

6. What is the difference between a letter of support and a letter of commitment?

- Letters of Commitment are from project partners, expressing their involvement and contributions to the project. They should detail how that support is relevant, public, and high-impact. They are not required, but accepted in Appendix III of the NOFO. Refer to the [SMART Letter\(s\) of Commitment Template](#).
- Letters of Support are endorsement letters from entities and individuals not involved directly in the project. SMART will only accept letters of support from members of Congress. They are not required.

7. How can my member of Congress submit a letter of support?

- To reduce the burden for applicants, the Stage 1: Planning and Prototyping Grant application does not request Letters of Support. However, a member of Congress may email a Letter of Support to USDOT's Office of Government Affairs at OSTGovAffairs@dot.gov

. The sender should copy smart@dot.gov

- on the email. The letter should be addressed to the U.S. Secretary of Transportation. Please note that Letters of Support are not required by the SMART Grants Program.
- Other letters of support are not accepted by the SMART Grants Program, nor will they make an application more or less competitive.

8. Where should I include details on potential impact to Historically Disadvantaged Communities?

- Details can be included in the Project Narrative, under the Community Impact section. This section should provide a description of how the project anticipates it will provide and measure benefits to the Historically Disadvantaged Communities detailed in the Project Location Section. This section may also outline benefits that would accrue to Historically Disadvantaged Communities outside of the specific project location.

9. If selected, will the Build America, Buy America (BABA) Act apply to my SMART grants project?

- Under the SMART Grants Program, if a project is considered infrastructure, the Build America, Buy America (BABA) Act applies. If it is not an infrastructure project, the appropriations provision of the BIL statute states that the Buy American Act applies to grant recipients' procurements unless there is another applicable domestic preference requirement. Whether a project is considered infrastructure will be determined during the

grant agreement process, consistent with 2 CFR part 184, following award announcements.

- Note that the FHWA Buy America statute (23 U.S.C. 313) and the FTA Buy America statute (49 U.S.C. 5323[j]) are not applicable to Stage 1 SMART grants unless the projects supported by those grants also receive funding from FHWA or FTA sources.
- USDOT considered but did not finalize a proposed waiver of BABA Act requirements that would have applied to the first year of Stage 1 Grants only.

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