



## SS4A Frequently Asked Questions

Potential applicants will find answers below to frequently asked questions about the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant opportunity.

### SS4A Grant Priorities

What is new in the FY23 NOFO compared to FY22?

The differences between the FY 2022 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and the FY 2023 NOFO are summarized in [What's New in 2023?](#)

What is the SS4A grant program?

The purpose of SS4A grant program is to improve roadway safety by significantly reducing or eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries. The program focuses on the development of a comprehensive safety action plan and its implementation for all users of our highways, streets, and roadways, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, motorists, personal conveyance and micromobility users, and commercial vehicle operators. The program provides funding to develop tools to strengthen a community's approach to roadway safety and save lives and prevent serious harm.

Do the Implementation Grant selection criteria prioritize system-wide safety approaches over site specific projects?

The scope and scale of eligible safety projects and strategies can range from specific spot treatment to corridors to interventions across a broad geographic area. The selection criterion Safety Impact includes the extent to which an application "employs low-cost, high-impact strategies that can improve safety over a wide geographic area." Applicants are encouraged to consider systemic approaches to the extent they address a community's safety problems.

On August 18, 2022, the White House announced that the Safe Streets and Roads for All discretionary grant program was a "J40 Initiative-covered" program. How does it affect the NOFO and the selection process?

The Biden-Harris Administration created the Justice40 Initiative to confront and address decades of underinvestment in disadvantaged communities. The initiative allows USDOT to identify and prioritize projects that benefit rural, suburban, tribal, and urban communities facing barriers to affordable, equitable, reliable, and safe transportation. The [NOFO](#) is consistent with the Office of Management and Budget and DOT definitions of a disadvantaged community designation. Learn more about the [Justice40 initiative](#).

I see that an affiliation with a Thriving Communities Network is a selection consideration for Implementation Grants. How can I verify if my community is affiliated with a Thriving Communities Network?

The Thriving Communities Networks includes technical assistance programs led by federal agencies including the U.S. Departments of Agriculture (USDA), Energy (DOE), and Transportation (DOT) to support urban, rural, and tribal communities with a history of economic distress and systemic disinvestment. Please review the resources below to identify whether your community qualifies:

- [USDA Rural Partners Network](#)
- [DOE Priority Energy Communities](#)
- DOT Communities: [Thriving Communities Program](#), [Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program](#)

### SS4A Grant Types

What types of grants are available under the SS4A program?

The SS4A program provides funding for two types of grants:

- **Planning and Demonstration Grants** provide Federal funds to develop, complete, or supplement a comprehensive safety action plan. Having an Action Plan in place is the foundation of the SS4A grant program. The goal of an Action Plan is to develop a holistic, well-defined strategy to prevent roadway fatalities and serious injuries in a locality, Tribe, or region. Planning and Demonstration grants may also fund supplemental Action Plan activities in support of an Action Plan, or demonstration projects in support of an Action Plan. See [Eligible Supplemental Planning and Demonstration Activities webpage](#) for more information.
- **Implementation Grants** provide Federal funds to implement projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan to address a roadway safety problem. Projects and strategies may be infrastructure, behavioral, and/or operational activities. Implementation Grant funding requests may also include project-level planning and design activities, supplemental Action Plan activities in support of an existing Action Plan, and demonstration activities in support of an Action Plan. Applicants must have a qualifying Action Plan that meets the eligibility requirements to apply for Implementation Grants.

If we are expecting to apply for both implementation projects and strategies, as well as supplemental planning, which application option in Valid Eval should we use?

Apply for an Implementation Grant using the following link:

[https://usg.valideval.com/teams/usdot\\_ss4a\\_2023\\_implementation/signup](https://usg.valideval.com/teams/usdot_ss4a_2023_implementation/signup)

. Implementation Grants may include supplemental planning and/or demonstration activities. Planning and Demonstration Grant applications do not include implementation.

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## Eligibility to Apply

Who is eligible to apply for Safe Streets and Roads for All grants?

Eligible applicants for all grants are:

1. A metropolitan planning organization (MPO);
2. A political subdivision of a State (e.g., cities, towns, counties, special districts, and similar units of local government);
3. A federally recognized Tribal government; or
4. A [multijurisdictional group of entities](#) described in (1) through (3).

For an Implementation Grant, eligible applicants listed above must also meet at least one of the following conditions:

1. Have ownership and/or maintenance responsibilities over a roadway network;
2. Be an eligible applicant with safety responsibilities that affect roadways; or
3. Have agreement from the agency that has ownership and/or maintenance responsibilities for the roadway within the applicant's jurisdiction.

Please see the [SS4A Eligibility](#) page and the [NOFO](#) to determine applicant eligibility.

If my community does not have a history of high roadway collisions, deaths, and injuries, could it still be selected for a Planning and Demonstration or Implementation Grant?

Yes, it is possible to not have a high number of roadway deaths and serious injuries and still receive a Planning and Demonstration Grant, or an Implementation Grant.

The selection criteria for a Planning and Demonstration Grant are primarily based on three quantitative ratings: 1) number of roadway fatalities from 2017-2021; 2) the fatality rate (per 100,000 population); and 3) percent of the jurisdiction's population that resides in an Underserved Community Census tract. These ratings will be compared against other applicants to determine funding recipients.

The selection criteria for an Implementation Grant include safety impact, which can be demonstrated in multiple ways. This can include historical crash data, as well as risk models, hazard analysis, the identification of high-risk roadway features, roadway safety audits/assessments, and/or other proactive safety analyses. Implementation Grant applications must also provide information on historical crash data where projects and strategies are to be implemented.

Must a project be in an Underserved Community in order to receive SS4A funding?

No. The Underserved Communities aspect of SS4A is included in the selection criteria for both Planning and Demonstration Grants, and Implementation Grants, and is a consideration for award selection amongst many considerations. Projects do not have to be in an Underserved Community in order to receive SS4A funds.

If a community was awarded a Planning and Demonstration Grant in FY23, would they -- in general -- be positioned to apply for an Implementation Grant in FY24? I'm not familiar with the expected time duration of the planning grants.

Unlikely. FY 23 award recipients who are developing new Action Plans should expect between 18 months and three years to complete an Action Plan using SS4A funds, which includes the time to establish a grant agreement and the time to develop a comprehensive safety action plan. Action Plans may take between 12-24 months to be completed. Implementation Grant applicants must have an eligible, complete Action Plan in place to be eligible to apply.

If I want to apply for only the demonstration activities (e.g., safety education behavior demonstration) based on my completed action plan, should I apply under the "Planning and Demonstration Grant" or the "Implementation Grant"? My understanding is we can apply under both grants. Is that correct?

Yes, you may include demonstration activities within either grant type – Planning and Demonstration Grants or Implementation Grants. If you are only applying for safety education behavior demonstration activities, you should apply under the Planning and Demonstration Grant type. Implementation Grant applications MUST include “carrying out projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan” (eligible Activity C).

What is meant by having a safety Action Plan that is “in progress” for applicants interested in applying for a Planning and Demonstration grant? We are interested requesting funds for demonstration activities and are not sure whether we qualify.

Being “in progress” means that your jurisdiction has already started the process of completing the various Action Plan components found in [Table 1 of the FY23 NOFO](#) (e.g., gathering and analyzing safety data, performing public outreach, considering equity impacts, etc.). FY22 Action Plan Grant award recipients who intend to establish grant agreements would have plans that qualify as “being in progress,” as well as communities that are developing Action Plans that meet the SS4A components but are being created without SS4A funding. Given that eligible demonstration activities and supplemental planning efforts must ultimately inform an Action Plan, we will consider funding requests for demonstration or supplemental planning activities only from applicants who already have an existing plan or are working to develop a safety Action Plan.

Can an MPO apply for a regional Planning and Demonstration Grant after some of our member jurisdictions received action plan grants last cycle?

Yes. Higher-level jurisdictions (e.g., MPO, county) may apply to develop new safety Action Plans even if member jurisdictions were previously awarded SS4A funds to develop safety Action Plans. In the application, clearly describe the plans to coordinate with member jurisdictions who received FY22 awards to avoid duplicative planning efforts, the boundaries of the new Action Plan, and whether the boundaries overlap with any existing safety Action Plans.

If an Action Plan is done at the county level can a municipality within the county apply directly for demonstration activities through a Planning and Demonstration Grant, or funding for projects and strategies? Or do those applications need to go through the county?

- Municipalities and other eligible applicants whose boundaries are within the scope of another jurisdiction's Action Plan may apply directly for a Planning and Demonstration Grant, provided the higher-level jurisdiction's Action Plan's geographic boundaries covers the eligible applicant's jurisdiction, the proposed activities are coordinated with the higher-level jurisdiction, the application demonstrates such coordination, and the demonstration activities will inform the development of the higher-level jurisdiction's Action Plan.
- As part of the application, the lower-level jurisdiction must indicate whether they are coordinating with the higher-level jurisdiction. DOT encourages applicants to include documentation affirming coordination among jurisdictions.
- If multiple communities within the higher-level jurisdiction want to apply using the same Action Plan separately, they are permitted to do so.
- [Please review the Multijurisdictional and Potentially Duplicative page on the SS4A website for more information.](#)

Our Town does not have a safety Action Plan, but our regional planning organization received a planning grant in FY22. Their Safety Action Plan is not completed yet. Can we develop our own Action Plan?

Yes, but SS4A encourages places in regions that received Action Plan Grants in FY22 to work with the award recipient. Such an application could be flagged as duplicative, and as part of the application the Town should clarify plans to coordinate with the regional planning organization to avoid duplicative planning efforts. The Department encourages complementary but distinctive activities, including but not limited to demonstration activities that will help inform the development of an Action Plan in an FY 2022 award, provided the proposed activities are coordinated with the higher-level jurisdiction (see more information on coordination efforts above). The Department, at its discretion, may choose not to fund duplicative planning efforts irrespective of their individual merits.

Can we apply for an Implementation Grant based on a regional plan?

Yes, as long as the regional plan is a completed, eligible safety Action Plan.

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[How to Apply](#)

Are applications on Valid Eval able to be saved and returned to, or does everything have to be uploaded at once?

Yes, Valid Eval has a saved draft feature.

If an agency is having a consultant help with the application process, is there a way to let the consultant log in to help or can only the one primary contact sign in?

Applicants may only have one username and password associated with an individual SS4A application.

Are there examples of completed applications or eligible Action Plans we can review?

No FY22 award recipients have completed their Action Plan to date; however, guidance on how to develop an Action Plan is available on the SS4A resource page.

Can I apply through Grants.gov instead of Valid Eval?

No. Applications submitted via Grants.gov will not be considered.

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### Application Materials

Can we use an alternative to options other than the ones provided in the NOFO to determine whether a Census tract is an underserved community? We have other local data that we would prefer to use.

No. Per the [NOFO](#), underserved communities are defined as any Tribal land; any territory or possession of the United States; or U.S. Census tracts identified in one of the following tools (may select only one option to identify underserved communities):

- The [USDOT Equitable Transportation Community \(ETC\) Explorer](#)
- (updated in May 2023) or any subsequent iterations released during the NOFO period; or
- The [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#) to identify disadvantaged communities

You must use one of these methods to identify which Census tracts are underserved communities and provide screenshots or other documentation as part of your application package. For instructions on how to use these tools see the [Calculating Percentage of Population in Underserved Communities Fact Sheet](#).

I have questions about how to fill in certain parts of the SF-424 forms. Where can I find more information on which elements are required?

See the [Standard Forms Fact Sheet](#) for more detailed information.

If we submitted an application and self-certified our plan under round 1 for SS4A but were not awarded an implementation grant, do we need to recertify under round 2?

Yes, you will need to complete a brand new, fully complete application package.

In what instances are applicants required to submit letters of support?

- Letters of support are optional and should be directly relevant to supporting the narrative. Letters of support from elected officials who are not directly involved in the project and strategy implementation are discouraged. However, for Implementation Grant applications that propose projects and strategies on roadways where they do not have ownership or maintenance responsibilities, or safety responsibilities over that roadway, a letter of intent is required from

the agencies with roadway ownership or maintenance responsibilities. The Leadership Commitment component of an Action Plan should be clearly shown in the Action Plan and/or the self-certification eligibility worksheet, and not via a separate Letter of Support. In addition, supporting documentation is encouraged to demonstrate coordination for multijurisdictional applications.

- Please address letters of support to Paul Teicher, Program Manager for the Safe Streets and Roads for All Program.
- If you do submit letters of support, please consolidate all of them into one pdf attachment to upload to your application in Valid Eval.

What is the SS4A map requirement for Implementation Grant applicants?

Implementation Grant applicants must provide a map in PDF format that shows the location of the jurisdiction, highlights the roadway network under the applicant's jurisdiction, the jurisdiction's High-Injury Network or equivalent geospatial identification of higher risk locations, and potential locations or corridors where the applicant is proposing to implement projects and/or strategies.

The SS4A application requests the Census tract IDs for each tract in the applicant jurisdiction. My jurisdiction has many Census tracts and the IDs do not all fit in the SS4A application form field. What should I do?

- Please enter all Census Tract IDs for your entire jurisdiction. All Census Tract IDs should be submitted in the same location, either as an application attachment or by typing them in the Valid Eval application field. Do not type some Census tract IDs in the Valid Eval application field and submit the remainder in an attachment. If submitting Census tract IDs as an attachment, please make a note on the application form and submit IDs to the Supporting Documents upload field on Valid Eval.
- Please include the full Census tract ID, not an abbreviation (e.g., for a Census tract in Cambridge, MA – include 25017359400, and not 94.00). If using TIGER files, the full Census tract ID is reported in the GEOID field.

When I select my jurisdiction in the ETC Explorer tool, the population shown does not match our listed population. What do I do?

Both the [Equitable Transportation Community Explorer \(ETC\) Explorer tool](#)

and the [Climate and Economic Justice Screening \(CEJST\) Tool](#) use Census as the unit of measurement. Not all project, municipal, county, or MPO boundaries correspond to Census tracts, so the tool will select the entire tract if the boundaries of the area that you select cut through a portion of a Census tract. For this reason, the jurisdiction population may be larger than the population count that you generally use for your community. If this impacts your fatality rate data significantly, you may address that discrepancy in your application narrative.

Note the County, Community, and MPO Selector tools in the ETC Explorer will report the population and underserved population for all the Census tracts that are included in the selected boundary, including those that touch or extend beyond the boundary. For county and MPO boundaries, this should be fairly

consistent with the actual population. The Community Selector, however, makes less consistent selections. To select Census tracts for a municipality, small community, or rural community, it is best to:

- Use the search tool to locate the applicant jurisdiction or zoom to the jurisdiction.
- Turn on the Community Boundaries (Census Places) map layer. Note that some communities may not be reflected in this layer.
- Select Census tracts one by one (hold down shift while selecting tracts) and/or using the rectangle selection tool. This process is described in the [Calculating Percentage of Population in Underserved Communities Fact Sheet](#).

Our Action Plan uses locally sourced crash data for 2016-2020, and not 2017-2021 crash data. Can we use different years other than 2017-2021 in our application?

- For the [fatality rate calculation](#) at the jurisdiction level, you must use 2017-2021 crash data. FARS is the preferred source for crash data because it helps with consistency in comparing applications, but if you have a data source that you feel is more accurate or appropriate, you may use it, as long as you provide the source of the data for the 2017-2021 time period.
- For the [project area crash data](#) for Implementation Grant applicants, 2017-2021 crash data is also required (see the [NOFO](#) Table 3). Crash data should be derived from the most recent set of 5-year FARS data, or another local data source illustrating the safety issue being addressed. You may need to use local data to identify crashes in the project area and/or to identify serious injury crashes within the project area.
- If there is information about crash trends from your Action Plan that is worth noting, but based on a different 5-year timeframe, you may include that information in your narrative. Please be sure to cite the source of that data.

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### Grant Awards, Funding, and Match

What are the DOT priorities when reviewing grants for award?

For Planning and Demonstration Grants, DOT seeks to make awards based on safety impact, equity, and additional safety context.

For Implementation Grants, DOT seeks to make awards to projects and strategies that:

- Save lives and reduce roadway fatalities and serious injuries;
- Incorporate equity, engagement, and collaboration into how projects and strategies are executed;
- Use effective practices and strategies; and
- Consider climate change, sustainability, and economic competitiveness in project and strategy implementation.

If the application includes supplemental planning and/or demonstration activities, DOT will also assess whether the applicant has described the scope of work, the roadway safety issues that necessitate further Action Plan development, and how those activities will inform an Action Plan.

Project readiness, funding to provide safety benefits for underserved communities, funding to rural areas, affiliation with a Thriving Communities network, and enhancing the diversity of award recipients are selection considerations for Implementation Grants. Budget costs are a consideration for both Planning and Demonstration and Implementation Grants.

How much funding is available?

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law established the SS4A program and approved \$6 billion in funding, with \$5 billion in advanced appropriations. For fiscal year 2023, \$1 billion has been made available for grants under the SS4A program, plus approximately an additional \$177 million for funding for Planning and Demonstration grants, or supplemental planning and demonstration activities in Implementation Grant requests, that was unallocated from FY 2022.

If DOT does not award all available funds this round, will leftover funds roll over into the next round?

Yes. If funds are not fully awarded in this round of funding, DOT would likely include them in the next round.

Is there a minimum or maximum award size?

There is no statutory minimum or maximum. However, the [NOFO](#) provides expected minimum and maximum ranges for each applicant type and DOT may award less than the total amount requested by the applicant. When considering the appropriate funding request, DOT recommends an applicant consider the level of effort to administer a Federal grant and the associated administrative requirements when developing the budget.

For Planning and Demonstration Grants, award amounts will be based on estimated costs, with an expected minimum of \$100,000 and an expected maximum of \$10,000,000. The Department expects larger award amounts for metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), applicants that are multijurisdictional in scope, or those conducting activities in a large geographic area.

For Implementation Grants, DOT expects the minimum award will be \$2,500,000 and the maximum award will be \$25,000,000.

Can I apply for and/or receive multiple SS4A awards?

For FY23 funding, an eligible applicant will only be able to submit one application, either for a Planning and Demonstration Grant OR an Implementation Grant, but not both. Applicants may, and are encouraged to, include supplemental planning and demonstration activities as part of their Implementation Grant applications.

Applicants who have already received an SS4A grant award may apply again for an additional SS4A award in future years. Depending on specific project timelines, it may be difficult for most FY 2023 awardees to complete an Action Plan through a new grant agreement before the next grant cycle in FY24. DOT expects to obligate SS4A award funding through signed grant agreements as expeditiously as possible, ideally within 12 months after awards have been announced. Applicants who received

Supplemental Planning or Implementation Grants in FY22 may apply for SS4A funding in future rounds and are not required to complete SS4A-funded projects before applying for additional funds.

Among well-rated applicants, the Secretary may prioritize applicants and jurisdictions that did not receive an SS4A grant in FY 2022 over applicants that did receive an FY 2022 award.

What kind of funds can make up the local match?

A local match of no less than 20 percent of the total project cost is required for all SS4A grant funds. Local match may include both cash as well as in-kind contributions. Details on cost-sharing and match can be found in 2 CFR § 200.306. Further guidance, illustrative examples, and guidance about how to calculate match can be found in [SS4A Match and Cost Share Examples Fact Sheet](#).

Are there specific award set-asides for rural, Tribal, or other entities?

No, there is no specific funding set aside for rural, Tribal, or other entities. However, for Implementation Grants the selection process includes consideration for applicants in rural areas, geographic diversity of applicants, and funding requests of less than \$10 million.

Can an entity apply for an SS4A grant at the same time that they're applying for other grant funding opportunities?

Generally, yes. We encourage applicants to leverage all available USDOT grant programs. However, if you receive multiple sources of funding for the same project, you will need to clearly delineate which sources fund which components or phases. Additionally, required local match requirements must be met individually for each source of Federal funds; local match cannot be double-counted across multiple Federal awards.

Could you provide guidance about what I need to know for hiring a contractor to support my SS4A efforts?

We have developed an FAQ document specific to [SS4A Costs and Contracting](#) that includes several questions and answers on these topics.

The expected Implementation Grant award range is \$2.5 million to \$25 million, but there is also wording in the NOFO about special considerations for requests under \$10 million. Are projects over \$10 million less likely to be awarded funding?

Implementation Grant applications requesting less than \$10 million may be given additional consideration as part of award selection. Other considerations include percent of funds to underserved communities, applicants from rural areas, priority communities included in the Thriving Communities Network, and places that enhance the geographic diversity of the Implementation Grant award selections.

Will the State DOT Local Assistance Program administer the funds and projects, or will the local agency work directly with USDOT once funding is awarded?

Grant agreements are between the Department and the award recipient. The SS4A program is not administered through State DOT Local Assistance Programs.

Can we use community development block grant (CDBG) funds to serve as local match?

No. Funds that originate at the Federal level are not eligible to be included as part of local match. Please see the [Match and Cost Share Fact Sheet](#) for more information on eligible sources of match funding.

If an MPO pays employees by Federal funds, can staff time still be used for in-kind?

No. Eligible match must come from non-Federal sources. Staff salaries and benefits funded by Federal sources would not be an eligible match.

If an eligible entity needs to prepare an Action Plan and would like to also be considered for a demonstration activity or supplemental planning, are the two requests tied together? Can the action plan be awarded and not the additional activity?

An application to develop a new Action Plan that includes supplemental planning and demonstration activities will be evaluated as one application. However, at the Department's discretion, it may separate the project into component pieces and only award funds for specific components of an overall application.

For entities wary about applying for just a planning grant, can you speak to how projects identified through this planning process might be eligible for other types of funds (SS4A implementation or other types of Federal funds?)

The SS4A program views Action Plans as a means to identify significant roadway safety problems and potential solutions. This activity builds evidence of the safety needs of a community, which can then be used to apply for a SS4A Implementation Grant, another Federal discretionary grant program such as RAISE, as well as State and regional funding opportunities.

If an FY22 grant recipient applies for and receives SS4A funding in FY23 or beyond, will a new grant agreement be needed or will the existing agreement with the FHWA be amended?

It is anticipated a new grant agreement will be executed for any new grant award, even if an award was received in FY22.

Can unrecovered indirect costs be used to meet the 20% local match requirement for SS4A?

Unrecovered indirect costs may be included as part of the local match, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.306(c). Applicants proposing indirect costs must:

- Provide an indirect cost rate letter from your Federal cognizant agency as a supporting document; and
- Document how the indirect costs are being applied to the non-Federal match.
- Please see the [Match and Cost Share Factsheet](#) for more information.

Can I use multiple sources of Federal funds to complete a SS4A project?

Yes. It is important to note that SS4A funds are administered predominantly under 2 CFR 200. Projects funded with SS4A funds have different requirements and reimbursement processes than the requirements that applicants may be familiar with for projects administered under Title 23 of the United States Code, such as projects under Federal-aid highway formula programs. Generally, when SS4A grant funds are combined with funds for programs administered under Title 23, U.S.C. (Title 23 funds) for a specific project, the requirements in Title 23, U.S.C. apply to the entire project.

While SS4A grant recipients may use multiple sources of Federal funds for a single project, administering a single project using SS4A funds and Federal funds with other requirements, such as Title 23 funds, may result in increased complexity, administrative burden, and risk of delay. For that reason, FHWA recommends that SS4A grant funding and other Federal funding sources either pay for different phases of project development or, if applicable, for different construction contracts within the scope of a project involving multiple, distinct roadway corridors. For example, a recipient may use Title 23 funds for the design phase of a project and then apply SS4A grant funds for the construction phase.

Costs of activities intended to meet the matching requirements of the SS4A program, including costs of another phase of project development, must meet eligibility criteria for all Federal funds being used and are to be included in the total project cost calculation for Federal share/non-Federal match of the project. Matching contributions must comply with 2 CFR 200.306, including that the match for a Federal award must not be included as contributions for any other Federal award.

Can a Federally recognized Tribal government use Tribal Transportation Program funds as non-Federal match for SS4A?

Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) funds can be used as a non-Federal match for the Safe Streets and Roads for All grant program in the following conditions:

1. The federally recognized Tribal government has a signed compact with the United States Department of Transportation through the Tribal Transportation Self Governance Program. The compact incorporates 25 USC 5325 as part of the applicable Title I provisions in the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act.
2. The federally recognized Tribal government has a signed compact with the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs, and that compact incorporates 25 USC 5325 as part of the applicable Title I provisions in the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act.

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## Eligible Plans and Projects

What activities are eligible for funding under a Planning and Demonstration Grant?

For a Planning and Demonstration Grant, eligible activities and costs are as follows:

- Creating or updating an existing Action Plan: Costs include only those that directly assist in the development of an Action Plan that covers the entire jurisdiction.
- Conducting supplemental planning: These costs must support the development of a new Action Plan or enhance an existing Action Plan.
- Carry out demonstration activities: Costs from these types of activities must be used to inform an Action Plan by testing a proposed project and strategy to determine their potential benefits and future scope. These activities must be temporary in nature. Costs associated with completing the required data collection and evaluation of these activities are eligible.

For more information about eligible activities for Planning and Demonstration Grants, check out the [Eligible Supplemental Planning and Demonstration Activities webpage](#).

What activities are eligible for funding under an Implementation Grant?

Activities *must* include carrying out projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan. Projects and strategies must be infrastructure, behavioral, and/or operational activities identified in the Action Plan and must be directly related to addressing the safety problem(s) identified in the application and Action Plan. Applications must identify the problems to be addressed, the relevant geographic locations, and the projects and strategies they plan to implement, based on their Action Plan or established plan. This should include specific intervention types to the extent practical. Please see the [Eligible Supplemental Planning and Demonstration Activities webpage](#) and the [NOFO](#) to determine Implementation Grant activity eligibility.

Implementation Grant applicants are encouraged to also include supplemental planning and/or demonstration activities in support of an existing Action Plan. Supplemental planning and/or demonstration activities included in an Implementation Grant do not need to be directly connected to the proposed projects and strategies, and may address different safety problems or be a different geographic scope, so long as they will inform an Action Plan.

What is the difference between supplemental planning and demonstration activities under eligible activity (A)—and the planning, design, and development activities for project and strategies identified in an Action Plan strategies—funded through an Implementation Grant under eligible activity (B)?

Supplemental planning activities under eligible activity (A) support or enhance an Action Plan. The final deliverable for supplemental planning is a written product that connects to, and enhances, an Action Plan and is publicly available. Similarly, Demonstration activities under eligible activity (A) inform an Action Plan by testing proposed project and strategy approaches to determine their potential benefits and future scope. Demonstration activities must measure potential benefits through data collection and evaluation and inform an Action Plan's list of selected projects and strategies and their future implementation. The final deliverable for Demonstration activities is an updated Action Plan that contains an assessment of demonstration projects and their impact on safety.

Planning, design, and development activities for projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan (B) support project-level design or implementation and are not focused on improving an Action Plan or informing an Action Plan's list of priority projects and strategies. A project-level environmental review or the construction design of a project are two such examples. Planning, design, and development activities for projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan (B) can only be funded through an Implementation Grant.

For Implementation Grants, if we want funding for design and pre-construction planning of infrastructure safety projects, do those costs belong under budget item (C) carrying out projects and strategies or (B) planning, design, and development activities for projects and strategies?

Conducting planning, design, and development activities for projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan are under eligible activity (B), conducting planning, design, and development activities for projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan. This includes design work associated with construction, and should be noted as such in the budget submission of the narrative for Implementation Grants. The construction portion of the costs for carrying out infrastructure safety projects would be listed under eligible activity (C).

Will USDOT review my Action Plan to see if I can apply for an Implementation Grant before I apply?

USDOT will not review any Action Plans, or combination of plans, prior to submission of applications to determine whether a potential applicant meets the eligibility requirement for an Implementation Grant or an Action Plan Grant to fund supplemental Action Plan activities. USDOT encourages the use of the [Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet](#) to determine whether your action plan qualifies as a comprehensive safety action plan for the purposes of the NOFO.

Applicants are expected to provide accurate information and must meet the standards and submit the supporting documentation outlined in the [Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet](#) as part of both an Implementation Grant application and Planning and Demonstration application funding only supplemental and/or demonstration activities. USDOT reserves the right to review plans and request additional information to affirm that a plan meets the eligibility criteria.

Does an eligible Action Plan have to be a single plan, or could an applicant for the SS4A program point to several studies or plans already in place that fulfill the elements of the Action Plan for the purposes of applying for an Implementation Grant?

The necessary elements may be found in more than one existing plan or document for this funding round. State-level action plans, including but not limited to Strategic Highway Safety Plans, State Highway Safety Plans, and Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans, cannot be used as an established plan.

For FY 2023, DOT requires applicants who have an Action Plan that is missing components required in [Table 1 of the NOFO](#) but still have a substantially similar plan based on the Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet to update an Action Plan to contain all components in a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan as outlined in [Table 1 of the NOFO](#). Updating an existing Plan to address missing components is a condition to receive Implementation Grant funding in FY 2023, and applicants applying for Implementation Grants

can request supplemental planning funds to update an existing Action Plan to conform with all the components in Table 1.

For more information on eligible and ineligible Action Plans, please check out the [Eligible Supplemental Planning and Demonstration Activities webpage](#).

Can an eligible entity apply for an Implementation Grant and also include additional supplemental planning and/or demonstration elements?

Yes, in addition to funding projects and strategies to address roadway safety problems, Implementation Grants may fund supplemental planning and/or demonstration activities in support of an existing Action Plan. Applicants must have an existing, eligible Action Plan to apply for Implementation Grants. The supplemental planning and/or demonstration activities do not need to be in the same location as the proposed projects and strategies, and can address a different safety problem, so long as they will inform an Action Plan.

For more information about what could be included in supplemental planning and/or demonstration activities, check out the [Eligible Supplemental Planning and Demonstration Activities webpage](#).

Does an Action Plan have to involve the entire community, or can it focus just on an especially problematic area?

The goal of an Action Plan is to develop a holistic, well-defined strategy to prevent roadway fatalities and serious injuries in a locality, Tribe, or region. Action Plans should cover an entire community and be comprehensive in nature. They are not the same as a feasibility study, or a road safety audit on one corridor. DOT generally expects Action Plans to be broader than just one neighborhood or problematic area. However, an eligible applicant could apply for a Planning and Demonstration grant for a subpart of a community if such a focus would best meet the needs of the applicant.

I have one unsafe corridor/location I want funding to address. Is this the right grant program to do so?

If you have an existing, eligible Action Plan in place that identifies the need for the safety improvements you are seeking to address, a project to address the unsafe corridor may be eligible for an SS4A Implementation Grant.

If you do not have an existing Action Plan in place, you are encouraged to work with others in your area to develop a multijurisdictional application that encompasses a broader geographic area, which could include the unsafe corridor of interest. Other grant opportunities at DOT or working with your State or local government to address the safety issue may also be better suited for addressing one specific corridor or problem area. These types of opportunities are outlined in the [DOT Navigator](#).

I want DOT to fund sidewalks in my community. Is this the right grant program to do so?

If you have an existing, eligible Action Plan in place that identifies the need for sidewalks to address a pedestrian safety problem, a project that includes sidewalks may be eligible for an SS4A Implementation Grant.

If you do not have an existing Action Plan, we would encourage you to review the materials and resources provided to determine whether pursuing such as Action Plan makes sense for your community.

My city/region has completed a high-quality safety planning process (Pedestrian or Bicyclist Safety Plan, Complete Streets Plan, Local Roadway Safety Plan, Vision Zero Action Plan, ADA Transition Plan, Tribal Transportation Safety Plan, etc.). Will this plan meet the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan requirements provided by SS4A and allow me to apply for an Implementation Grant?

Possibly. Please use the [Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet](#) to determine if your plan is eligible. Please review the [Action Plan Requirements FAQs](#) for more information. An applicant may use multiple plans to determine eligibility.

If an MPO applies for a Planning and Demonstration grant, does that application prohibit local cities/towns who are in the MPO boundary from applying for their own/independent Planning and Demonstration grant? If an MPO and a city apply in the same cycle, are they directly competing?

Higher-level jurisdictions (e.g., MPOs) and member jurisdictions (e.g., cities, towns, within the MPO boundary) may each individually apply for Planning and Demonstration grants. However, coordination is strongly encouraged to avoid duplicative planning efforts and overlapping safety Action Plans. Please review the information and scenarios on the [Multijurisdictional and Potentially Duplicative Applications](#) page.

Who is required to "adopt" the safety action plan? Is it the City Council?

Applicants must adhere to their own local standard practice for adopting plans, studies, and obtaining approvals from the necessary authorities (e.g., City Council, signed by Mayor or Town Manager, etc.)

Can individual agencies reference a state's Strategic Highway Safety Plan that sets a Vision Zero goal to meet some of the requirements of SS4A Action Plans?

No. State-level required planning efforts (e.g., a Strategic Highway Safety Plan required in 23 U.S.C. § 148, State Highway Safety Plans required in 23 U.S.C. § 402, Commercial Vehicle Safety Plans required in 49 U.S.C. § 31102, etc.) as well as Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans in 49 U.S.C. § 5329 cannot be used as an established plan to apply for an Implementation Grant.

How long is a safety plan effective for? Would we need to create a new plan every 5 years?

Safety Action Plans should be periodically updated to ensure they continue to meet community safety needs. This could be in portions that change over time (e.g., updated crash information, modifying the projects and strategies list, providing a progress report to the community about the Action Plan's execution, etc.).

Can Planning and Demonstration funds be used to update a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan / ADA Transition Plan / Complete Streets Prioritization Plan to make sure our plan contains the eight required elements of a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan?

Yes.

If a government body has not committed to "an eventual goal of zero roadway fatalities and serious injuries," would we have to get that as part of the implementation award?

Yes, as part of the FY23 funding round, applicants that submit a Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet that includes a "no" response for any of the 9 checkboxes must update their Action Plan during the execution of a grant agreement to align with all the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan components in [Table 1 of the NOFO](#) as a condition to receiving SS4A funds. You can request SS4A funds to support the updates or fund that in some other way.

Can Implementation Grants include right-of-way (ROW) costs required to complete the projects?

Yes, ROW acquisition is an eligible cost and there is a line item in the SF-424C form for it (Cost Classification 2.) Please review the [Eligible Implementation Grant Projects webpage](#) for more information.

Would a system-wide Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices engineering study be eligible activity under a Planning and Demonstration Grant?

No, demonstration activities and pilot programs must inform Action Plans through small-scale tests with finite trial periods intended to gauge potential project and strategy effectiveness that will lead to project and strategy selection at a systemic level. Systemic-level MUTCD related activities would be a project/strategy, not demonstration activities.

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#### Multijurisdictional Applications and Partnering Across Agencies

For more information about this topic, check out the [Multijurisdictional and Potentially Duplicative Applications webpage](#).

Can multijurisdictional applications be submitted for Planning and Demonstration Grants?

Yes. Applications that engage multiple entities in the same region are encouraged to promote collaboration across multiple jurisdictions, leverage the expertise of multiple agencies, and facilitate partnerships with entities to benefit safety across the region. Multijurisdictional applications may also be able to leverage the experience of entities that have received Federal funding in the past and have knowledge of Federal grant administration requirements. Applicants may propose the development of a single Action Plan covering all jurisdictions, or several plans for individual jurisdictions, administered by the lead applicant.

I'm concerned my application is going to be flagged as duplicative. Can you speak about the situations in which duplicative applications are a concern to USDOT?

Planning and Demonstration Grant applications will be reviewed as part of the evaluation process to identify if multiple applicants requested funding for the same jurisdiction. For example, a city within a county with an MPO that has a regional transit agency all apply as individual applicants to develop a new plan for the same community in four separate Action Plan Grant applications. Multiple Planning and Demonstration Grants in the same jurisdiction will be flagged as potentially duplicative. The purpose of the duplicative flag is to minimize the number of Planning and Demonstration Grant awards that cover the same exact area and are performing similar activities unless there is a compelling reason multiple Planning and Demonstration Grants are needed.

Duplicative efforts (e.g., requesting funds to develop an Action Plan even though a higher-level jurisdiction already received an FY 2022 award that covers the same area, multiple applicants requesting to carry out the same types of demonstration activities in the same area) will be identified and assessed for merit within the context of other jurisdictions and their planning and demonstration activities. The Department encourages complementary but distinctive activities, including but not limited to demonstration activities that will help inform the development of an Action Plan in an FY 2022 award.

Implementation Grant applications in nearby jurisdictions, but for different projects, are permitted. An applicant may include multiple activities under a single Implementation grant application and should not submit separate applications.

If someone applies as part of a partnership can they only submit one application?

Applicants are limited to one application as the named, lead applicant per grant round. In addition, applicants can support other projects as partners, so long as they do not exceed more than one application as the lead applicant per round.

If a State participates in a multijurisdictional effort, can their contribution count as an in-kind match as opposed to asking for a cash match?

Yes, a State's participation in a multijurisdictional effort can be counted as either an in-kind or cash match. Note States are not eligible SS4A applicants but can partner with an SS4A grant recipient outside the grant agreement with the Department.

For multi-jurisdictional plans, is the match requirement only for the entity who 'owns' the plan, or is it meant to spread equally among all participating jurisdictions?

The Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant program requires at least 20 percent of the total project funding to come from non-Federal sources. Multijurisdictional applicants can decide how to spread the non-Federal match requirement, so long as 20 percent of the overall project cost is paid for from non-Federal sources.

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## Program Requirements

Do Federal requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and/or National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) need to be completed prior to applying for an SS4A Implementation Grant?

No. Implementation Grant applications can include a funding request to complete necessary analyses for NEPA and other environmental laws, including the NHPA, as part of an Implementation Grant under eligible activity (B) project and strategy-specific planning, design, and development activities. The NEPA and NHPA processes must be complete prior to funds being released for construction.

How does a grant recipient satisfy its environmental obligations?

Grant recipients are subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other environmental laws. Project sponsors must conduct the applicable environmental studies to identify the project impacts along with any required mitigation. NEPA and environmental resource subject-matter experts should develop materials that identify and evaluate impacts to human and natural resources including the following:

- Low income/minority communities,
- Historic properties,
- Park and recreation lands,
- Wildlife and waterfowl refuges,
- Wetlands, and
- Threatened and endangered species and their habitats.

Project sponsors should also assess the need to obtain new rights-of-way and evaluate those impacts. If the project sponsor lacks staff with the specific skills, knowledge, and experience to conduct environmental studies, they are obliged to engage staff expertise at their State Departments of Transportation or fund consultants/contractors. Hiring consultants/contractors to directly support the execution of the grant award and its activities is considered an eligible cost under the grant.

For demonstration activities that involve feasibility studies using quick-build strategies, the Department expects most quick build activities to receive a Categorical Exclusion designation.

FHWA's [Overview of NEPA as Applied to Transportation Projects - Environment- Federal-aid Essentials for Local Public Agencies](#) provides training materials and resources that will help applicants better understand the requirements of NEPA and other federal laws and requirements for projects administered by FHWA.

Does the SS4A program require a benefit-cost analysis for Implementation Grant applications?

No, a benefit-cost analysis is not required as part of an application. Implementation Grant applications are required to provide information on safety impact, which includes a description of the problem, a safety impact assessment, historical crash information, and implementation costs by project location. For this round of funding, the Department will consider a cost per outcome figure based on the Federal funding requested in relation to the persons killed and seriously injured in the project area(s). See the [Project Area Crash Data Fact Sheet](#) for details on this process.

In what ways are rural areas and urban areas treated differently?

DOT will take into consideration rural areas and creating a geographically diverse set of awardees when determining Implementation Grant awards. There are no specific set-aside amounts rural and/or Tribal areas.

If we receive an Implementation Grant, do we need to follow State and Federal design standards for infrastructure safety projects?

Infrastructure safety projects that receive Federal funds must abide by any applicable Federal design standard requirements, including but not limited to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, as well as any applicable guidance.

A funding recipient may also be required to follow any applicable State design standards, which will depend on whether the activities are occurring on a State-owned road and the extent to which State design standards apply to roadways owned by non-State entities such as in the instance of county-owned roads or local roads maintained and owned by a city.

Applicants should indicate in their application if they will be seeking permission to use roadway design standards that are different from those generally applied by the State in which the project is located.

What are the domestic preference requirements for SS4A grants?

Infrastructure projects and demonstration activities are subject to the Build America, Buy America Act (Pub. L. No 117–58, div. G §§ 70901–70927) as clarified in OMB Memorandum M-22-11.31: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/M-22-11.pdf>. Additional information on construction materials requirements can be found at the following link: [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/construction/contracts/buyam\\_qa\\_baba.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/construction/contracts/buyam_qa_baba.cfm). The Department does not expect to provide waivers related to domestic preference requirements for demonstration activities focused on piloting technologies.

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Timelines

What is the application deadline?

Applications must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Monday, July 10, 2023. Late applications will not be accepted. Applications must be submitted via the Valid Evaluation system at the following links:

- [Planning and Demonstration Grant Application](#)

[Implementation](#)

If I'm awarded a grant, when will I receive the funding?

USDOT expects to obligate SS4A funding via a signed grant agreement between the Department and the recipient within 12 months after awards have been announced. Individual recipient timelines may vary depending on the complexity of project, status of project readiness, and other factors. Funding is expected to be provided on a reimbursement basis once a grant agreement is established, with corresponding invoices.

Once grant recipients have established a grant agreement, how much time do they have to spend those funds and complete the work?

The expected period of performance for Planning and Demonstration Grant agreements is between 12 months and five years, depending on the scope and extent of grant activities. The period of performance for Implementation Grant agreements may not exceed 5 years.

When will awards be made for this NOFO funding round (FY23)?

The Department anticipates making two rounds of awards for this [NOFO](#): one earlier round of awards only focused on applications requesting Planning and Demonstration Grants, and a later round of awards that would encompass Implementation Grants as well as Planning and Demonstration Grant applicants who did not receive funding in the earlier round. The earlier round is anticipated to be in October 2023, and the later round is anticipated to be in December 2023.

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Last updated: Wednesday, June 28, 2023