Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART)

DEADLINE	PROGRAM NAME & LINK
Tuesday, October 10, 2023, 5:00 p.m. EST *(Applications must be submitted via Valid Eval)*	[Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Grant Program	US Department of Transportation](#)

DESCRIPTION

The SMART grant program from USDOT aims to provide grants to eligible entities to conduct demonstration projects focused on advanced smart city or community technologies and systems in a variety of communities to improve transportation efficiency and safety. The program funds projects that are focused on using technology interventions to solve real-world challenges and build data and technology capacity and expertise in the public sector.

The SMART Grants Program includes two stages: Stage 1 Planning and Prototyping Grants (Stage 1 Grants) and Stage 2 Implementation Grants (Stage 2 Grants). The current Notice of Funding Opportunity is for Stage 1 grants with the Stage 2 Grant Notice of Funding Opportunity to be released in 2024.

What's New this Round? Two Stage grant program as noted above, with updates of sections from the 2022 Grant Program:

- Section A.2 adds an anticipated minimum award size of $250,000.
- Section C.1 clarifies the definition of a collaborative application.
- Section D.2 provides further detail on what should be included in the Brief Project Description section of the Key Information Questions (Question #10).
- Section D.2 asks applicants to provide details on workforce impacts (Question #24).
- Section D.2 asks applicants to identify the project's anticipated Stage 1 and Stage 2 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements (Questions #25 and #26).
- Section D.2 provides additional guidance on the required Budget Narrative, including a page limit.
- Section D.2 adds a Project Location File requirement as Appendix IV.
- Section E.1 adds required information about performance metrics to Technical Merit Criterion and Project Readiness Criterion #1.
- Section F.2 further describes expected Build America, Buy America requirements for applicants that are awarded funding.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants

- State government
- Political subdivision of a State
- Federally recognized Tribal government
- Public transit agency or authority
- Public toll authority
- Metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs)
- Group of two or more eligible entities listed above applying through a single lead applicant (Group Application)

Projects

The SMART Grants Program funds multiple technology areas, as listed below. Projects must demonstrate at least one technology area and may demonstrate more than one technology area, including:

- Coordinated Automation
- Connected Vehicles
- Intelligent, Sensor-Based Infrastructure
- Systems Integration
- Commerce Delivery and Logistics
- Leveraging Use of Innovative Aviation Technology
- Smart Grid
- Smart Technology Traffic Signals

FUNDING

General

- Up to $100 million is expected to be awarded for FFY 2023.
    - Up to $50 million available for Stage 1 grants (current Notice of Funding Opportunity)
    - Up to $50 million available for Stage 2 grants associated with Notice of Funding Opportunity to be released in 2024.
- Anticipated award of up to 30 Stage 1 grants of up to $2 million per award
- Minimum award size of $250,000 for Stage 1 grants

Cost-Sharing

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

SELECTION CRITERIA

Stage 1 SMART Grant awards will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Technical Merit Criteria
    - Criterion 1 - Identification and understanding of the problem to be solved.
    - Criterion 2 – Appropriateness of proposed solution
    - Criterion 3 – Expected benefits

- Project Readiness Selection Criteria
    - Criterion 1 – Feasibility of workplan
    - Criterion 2 – Community engagement and partnerships
    - Criterion 3 – Leadership and qualifications

- Additional Considerations Criteria
  - Criteria 1 – Benefit to disadvantaged communities

PROJECT TIMEFRAME

The estimated period of performance for Stage 1 grant agreements is up to 18 months. The USDOT expects to obligate SMART award funding via a signed grant agreement between the Department and the recipient as flexibly and expeditiously as possible. USDOT expects that recipients will be ready for a signed grant agreement no later than six (6) months after the announcement of awards, and recipients must fully liquidate grant funds by the end of the project's period of performance.

ADMINISTRATIVE PRIORITIES

Departmental Priorities

USDOT priorities for the SMART Grant Program include the following:
- Safety
- Climate change and sustainability
- Equity and Justice40 Initiative
- Workforce development, job quality, and wealth creation

SMART Grants Program Priorities

SMART Grants seek to provide significant benefits in the following categories:
- Safety and reliability
- Resiliency
- Equity and access
- Climate
- Partnerships
- Integration

PENNDOT ROLE

PennDOT Emphasis

PennDOT continues to promote technology innovations for the safe and efficient performance of the transportation network. The Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation grant provides PennDOT, and its partners, the opportunity to continue to address safety, reliability, and mobility by utilizing advanced and emerging technologies to solve transportation issues.

Submitting an Application for the SMART Grant Program

Prior to developing an application for the SMART Grant Program, potential applicants in Pennsylvania are asked to contact the PennDOT Transformational Technology Division in order to refine the project concept and coordinate efforts around the State. If you plan on submitting a project for the SMART Grant Program, please reach out to Derrick Herrmann (deherrmann@pa.gov).