

# Public Transportation COVID-19 Research Demonstration Grant Program

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Question 1: What are some of the eligible costs for this grant?**

Answer 1: For all eligible costs, please refer to the following circular:

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/fta-circular-61001e-research-technical-assistance-and-training-programs>. The allowable costs are located in Section 4 of the circular.

### **Question 2: What is the delineation between third-party procurement and the independent evaluator?**

Answer 2: Applicants may partner with third-party entities eligible within the sub recipient list – but should provide documentation justifying their selection. An independent evaluator will be required to develop an evaluation plan and collect, store, and manage data required to fulfill the evaluation requirement. Please reference Section F – Federal Award Administration Information Part 3.A of the funding notice for further detail on the independent evaluator.

### **Question 3: When are the awards for this funding opportunity expected to be announced?**

Answer 3: The anticipated timeline to announce awards for this funding opportunity is by the end of the 2020 calendar year.

### **Question 4: What is a suggested non-Federal match?**

Answer 4: Per the funding opportunity, there is not a required or recommended non-Federal match amount. However, FTA may give additional consideration to applicants that propose a non-Federal share and may view these applicants as more competitive.

### **Question 5: Is it allowable to combine this grant funding with other Federal grant programs to accomplish proposed projects?**

Answer 5: An applicant must consider the particular eligibilities and restrictions associated with any source of Federal funds. An applicant should consult the government agency responsible for the other grant program before mixing Federal funding sources in support of the same activity. If an applicant intends to combine FTA funding with other Federal funds, this must be disclosed in the application as part of the proposed project budget.

### **Question 6: Is it possible for an applicant to submit multiple project proposals within their application?**

Answer 6: Per the funding opportunity, each applicant must submit only one proposal per application. Each proposal may have multiple projects that are linked together as part of the overall proposal. FTA encourages applicants to identify scaled funding options in case insufficient funding is available to fund a project at the full requested amount.

### **Question 7: Is my application not eligible if it does not serve rural areas/address the R.O.U.T.E.S. Initiative?**

Answer 7: An application does not need to address a rural area or the R.O.U.T.E.S. Initiative to be eligible – please reference the “Eligible Projects” section of the funding opportunity for further detail.

**Question 8: Are the evaluation criteria weighted?**

Answer 8: No, evaluation criteria are not weighted

**Question 9: Where are the project objectives listed within the funding opportunity?**

Answer 9: The project goals and objectives of developing, deploying, and demonstrating innovative solutions that improve the operational efficiency of transit agencies as well as enhance the mobility of transit users affected by COVID-19 public health emergency are listed in Section A – Program Description of the funding opportunity

**Question 10: How much will be awarded per project?**

Answer 10: There is no minimum or maximum grant award amount, but FTA intends to fund as many meritorious projects as possible

**Question 11: Can a Section 5307 Urbanized Area Program recipient include Section 5311 Rural Program recipients for areas adjacent to the urban area in its application?**

Answer 11: Yes, per the “Eligible Applicants” section of the Notice of Funding Opportunity, both Section 5307 funding recipients and Section 5311 funding recipients are eligible to receive funding and may submit a consolidated application.

**Question 12: Are currently-contracted COVID-19 expenditures eligible to be offset with the grant program?**

Answer 12: Existing COVID-19 expenditures are not eligible to be offset by this grant program.

**Question 13: Should proposed projects fall within all four highlighted project areas within the eligible projects section?**

Answer 13: Proposed projects do not need to meet all four areas and may be specific to one or more of the four target areas.

**Question 14: What is intended by the category that seeks to increase confidence in public transit?**

Answer 14: This category’s intent is to develop, deploy, and demonstrate proposals that implement solutions which encourage and increase transit use.

**Question 15: Can FTA elaborate on the language within the funding opportunity in Section E – Application Review Information Part 2 – Review and Selection Process on “Prior fare payment innovation efforts may receive priority consideration.”**

Answer 15: This statement refers to the opportunity for prospective applicants that have already done significant work in cashless payments that could be leveraged and enhanced through this program.

**Question 16: Should the authorized representative in Grants.gov be a direct employee of the lead applicant?**

Answer 16: An organization must register with Grants.gov, then define specific user roles within Grants.gov and the authorized representative a direct employee of the applicant.

**Question 17: Are any applications disqualified from being submitted due to the stated language within the project evaluation criteria addressing the September 2, 2020 Presidential memorandum?**

Answer 17: All interested applicants may apply.