



USDOT Discretionary Grants Opportunity

Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Program

RAISE is a competitive discretionary grant program authorized under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to close the funding gap for surface transportation infrastructure projects with a significant regional or local impact.

The program will award approximately \$1.5 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 for projects that address the following objectives:

- Improve safety
- Environmental sustainability
- Quality of life
- Mobility and community connectivity
- State of good repair
- Partnership and collaboration
- Innovation
- Economic competitiveness and opportunity including tourism

Full details on the program, including the Notice of Funding Opportunity, are published on the [USDOT RAISE Grant program web page](#).



FY 2024 APPLICATION DEADLINE:

Applications are due:
Feb. 28, 2024
11:59 p.m. EST

FY 2025 NOFO PUBLICATION DATE:

October 15, 2024

FY 2025 APPLICATION DEADLINE:

January 13, 2025
at 11:59 p.m. EST

Changes from the FY 2023 NOFO

The program incorporates a number of changes from FY 2023:

- Simplifies the NOFO through the use of plain language and tables to organize information.
- Refines the merit criteria rating rubric. For example, this NOFO provides more examples of project elements that align with a “High” rating under safety, environmental sustainability and innovation.
- Clarifies information applicants should provide in the project budget document for the financial completeness review.
- Updates data used to determine urban, rural, and areas of persistent poverty designations, and uses the Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), created by the White House Council on Environmental Quality, to identify historically disadvantaged communities.
- In addition to providing this application obligation, and expenditure deadlines for FY 2024 funding, USDOT outlines the application, obligation and expenditure deadlines for FY 2025 and 2026 funding. USDOT intends to publish subsequent NOFOs for FY 2025 and FY 2026, which may incorporate additional changes to the program.
- FY 2024 Projects of Merit, which are highly rated applications not selected for award, will automatically be carried forward for consideration under FY 2025 RAISE funding. However, if there are any changes to the FY 2024 project being considered in the FY 2025 round, including scope, schedule, and budget, an applicant must submit an amendment to the application by the FY 2025 application deadline in order to be considered. The applicant is also responsible for updating an application should the FY 2025 RAISE NOFO include program or policy changes from this FY 2024 NOFO.

Eligible capital projects include projects or groups of related projects such as:

- Highway, bridge or other road projects
- Public transportation projects
- Passenger and freight rail transportation projects
- Port infrastructure investments (*port infrastructure and land ports of entry*)
- Surface transportation components of an airport project
- Intermodal projects whose component parts are otherwise an eligible project type
- Projects to replace or rehabilitate a culvert or prevent stormwater runoff for the purpose of improving habitat for aquatic species
- Projects investing in surface transportation facilities that are located on Tribal land
- Any other surface transportation infrastructure project that USDOT considers to be necessary to advance the goals of the program.

Eligible planning projects include projects or groups of related projects such as:

- Development of master plans, comprehensive plans, transportation corridor plans, and integrated economic development, land use, housing, and transportation plans
- Zero emission plans for transit fleets
- Planning activities related to the development of a multimodal freight corridor (*including those that seek to reduce conflicts with residential areas and with passenger and non-motorized traffic*)
- Planning activities related to zero emissions goods movement
- Development of port and regional port planning (*including statewide or multi-port planning within a single jurisdiction or region*)
- Risk assessments and planning to identify vulnerabilities (*address the transportation system's ability to withstand an emergency or major disaster*).

Eligible Applicants

- States and the District of Columbia
- Any territory or possession of the United States
- Unit of local government
- A public agency or publicly chartered authority established by one or more states
- Special purpose district or public authority with a transportation function
- Federally recognized Tribe or consortium of such Tribes
- Transit agency
- Multi-state or multijurisdictional group of separately eligible entities





Federal Award Information

The minimum RAISE capital grant award is \$5 million in urban areas and \$1 million in rural areas. The maximum grant award for capital and planning grants is \$25 million. There is no minimum award amount for planning grants. FY 2024 RAISE grant funds are available for obligation through September 30, 2028, and funds must be expended by September 30, 2033.

The following outlines the obligation and expenditure deadlines for FY 2024 and FY 2026:

FY 2024 Funding Obligation Deadline:	FY 2024 Funding Expenditure Deadline:	FY 2025 Funding Obligation Deadline:	FY 2025 Funding Expenditure Deadline:	FY 2026 Funding Obligation Deadline:	FY 2026 Funding Expenditure Deadline:
Sept. 30, 2028	Sept. 30, 2033	Sept. 30, 2029	Sept. 30, 2034	Sept. 30, 2030	Sept. 30, 2035

Grant Fund Awards Distribution and Restrictions

Half of the funds awarded (*not more than \$750 million*) will be awarded to rural projects and half to urban projects. Additionally, USDOT will award at least \$75 million for the planning, preparation or design of eligible projects. No more than 15% of the funds made available for RAISE grants may be awarded to projects in a single state.

Cost Sharing or Matching

The federal share of project costs may not exceed 80% unless the project is in a rural area, a Historically disadvantaged community (HDC) or an area of persistent poverty (APP). The NOFO includes a cost sharing or matching equation recommended by USDOT to determine the cost share. USDOT does not use an applicant's cost share when evaluating applications on merit.

Areas of Persistent Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged Community

Federal cost share may be increased above 80 percent for projects located in APP or HDCs. USDOT must award at least \$35 million for projects located in APP or HDCs. APP is defined as any county that has consistently had greater than or equal to 20% of the population living in poverty during the 30 years preceding November 15, 2021. HDC will be part of the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative and will use that definition for the NOFO notice. HDCs include a certain qualifying census tract, any Tribal land, or any territory or possession of the United States.

Merit Criteria

USDOT will consider whether the anticipated benefits are clear, direct, data-driven, and significant (*rating either “high”, “medium”, “low” or “non-responsive”*):

- **Safety:** seeks to protect motorized or non-motorized travelers and communities from safety risks
- **Environmental Sustainability:** incorporates considerations of climate change and environmental justice in the project planning or delivery stage
- **Quality of Life:** increases affordable transportation choices and expands active transportation usage or significantly reduces vehicle dependence
- **Mobility and Community Connectivity:** addresses system-wide connectivity with access to transit, micro-mobility and mobility-on-demand
- **Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity:** improves intermodal or multimodal freight mobility, facilitates tourism and promotes robust job creation
- **State of Good Repair:** mitigates current or projected system vulnerabilities and restores and modernizes existing core infrastructure assets
- **Partnership and Collaboration:** collaborates with public and/or private entities and engages residents and community-based organizations to ensure equity
- **Innovation:** uses innovative technologies, innovative project delivery; or innovative financing

To receive a “high” criterion rating, the criterion must be addressed as a primary project purpose, include clear, direct, data-driven (*capital projects only*), significant benefits, and must align with at least one of the benefits described in the high column of the merit criteria rubric listed in the NOFO. A project is recommended if six or more of the eight merit criteria ratings are “high” and none of the merit criteria ratings are “non-responsive”.



Review and Selection Process

The RAISE grant program review and selection process consist of merit criteria review; project readiness review (technical capacity assessment, environmental risk assessment, and financial completeness assessment); economic analysis; and senior review. Applications selected for RAISE funding must demonstrate efforts to consider climate change and environmental justice impacts; entities are required to do so before receiving funding. USDOT will first evaluate all projects against the RAISE merit criteria. Competitive capital (construction) applications will undergo a second-tier analysis of project readiness (*environmental risk assessment, financial completeness assessment, and technical capacity assessment*) and their economic (benefit-cost) analysis. Second-tier analysis for planning projects consists of a financial completeness assessment and a technical capacity assessment.

Applications are due February 28, 2024 by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on Grants.gov, and selections will be announced by June 27, 2024.

Your Infrastructure Finance and grant writing professionals stand by ready to support project sponsors applying for funding from the RAISE Grant Program.

If you need any assistance or have questions, please contact:

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