USDOT Discretionary Grants Opportunity

Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Program Stage 1 Planning and Prototyping Grants

Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Stage 1 Planning and Prototyping Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis to conduct demonstration projects focused on advanced smart city or community technologies and systems to improve transportation efficiency and safety.

For FY2024, the total funding available is $50 million, with an estimated 30 Stage 1 grant awards of up to $2 million per award. There is an anticipated minimum award size of $250,000.

The FY24 Notice of Funding Opportunity incorporates several refinements, including additional application details regarding the lead applicant, project summary, and community size. The NOFO also provides for consideration of transportation insecurity with respect to the project's Expected Benefits (Merit Criterion #3), clarifies data management plan requirements, and adds guidelines for project signage and public acknowledgments.

All applications must be submitted on Valid Eval. USDOT will not review or accept any application materials submitted on Grants.gov.

For more information, please visit USDOT SMART Grants.

May 20, 2024
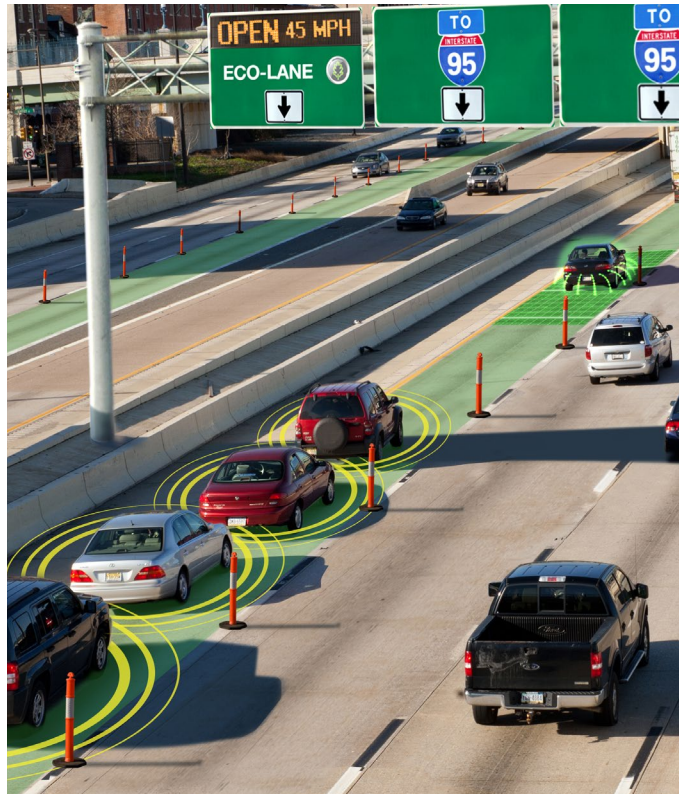
APPLICATION DEADLINE:

Friday
July 12, 2024
5:00 PM EDT

Grant Program Summaries:

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Eligible Activities

SMART Grants projects *must* demonstrate at least one technology area listed below and may demonstrate more than one technology area. Project types include but are not limited to the following:

- **Coordinated Automation:** Working to minimize the impact of accessibility to vulnerable groups and modes of transportation while using automated transportation and autonomous vehicles.

- **Connected Vehicles:** Sending and receiving information from vehicles to provide advanced and reliable connectivity. For example, information regarding vehicle movements in the network and using vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-everything communications.

- **Intelligent, Sensor-Based Infrastructure:** Collecting and reporting real-time data for everyday transportation-related operations and performance purposes with the use of intelligent infrastructure.

- **Systems Integration:** Combining intelligent transportation systems with other existing and advanced transportation technologies.

- **Commerce Delivery and Logistics:** Supporting efficient goods and movement with innovative data and technological solutions. This includes connected vehicle probe data, road weather data, global positioning data, improved travel time reliability, reduced fuel consumption and emissions, and reduced labor and vehicle maintenance costs.

- **Leveraging Use of Innovative Aviation Technology:** Supporting transportation safety and efficiencies *(such as traffic monitoring and infrastructure inspection)* with the use of innovative aviation technologies.

- **Smart Grid:** Creating an energy transmission and distribution system that is efficient. This system will support energy capture, electric vehicle deployment, and/or freight or commercial fleet fuel efficiency.

- **Smart Technology Traffic Signals:** Updating the use of traffic signals through automated traffic signal performance measures, optimization of corridor timing, improve vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle detection at traffic signals, use of connected vehicle technologies, replacing traffic signals that are outdated, and/or paying temporary staff hours to update traffic signaling *(only for entities with a population of less than 500,000).*
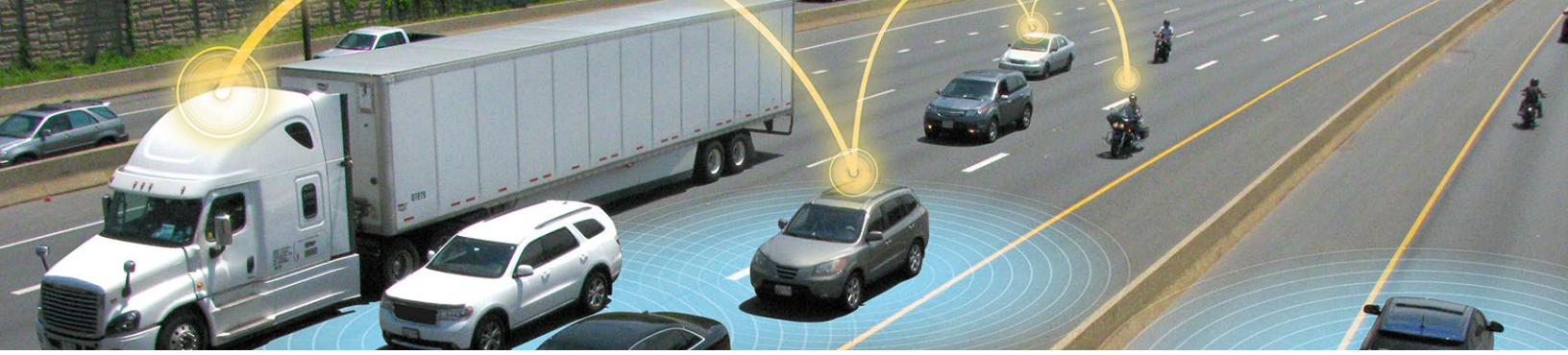

Funding Categories and Set Asides

The BIL established the SMART Grants Program with $500 million in advanced appropriations, including $100 million for FY24. The NOFO makes available up to approximately $50 million for FY24 Stage 1 grants under the SMART Grants Program. USDOT anticipates approximately $50 million in funding will be awarded for Stage 2 projects in a future NOFO to be issued in calendar year 2024.

Stage 1 Planning and Prototyping Grants (Stage 1 Grants)
USDOT will award up to 30 Stage 1 Grants for FY24. Maximum grants for Stage 1 Grants are $2 million per award. There is an anticipated minimum award size of $250,000.

Funding Restrictions
Up to 40% is available for eligible projects that primarily benefit communities. Up to 30% may support eligible projects that primarily benefit midsized communities. Up to 30% may support eligible projects that primarily benefit rural communities or regional partnerships.

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Award Size and Matching Requirements

There are no cost sharing or matching requirements for the Stage 1 SMART discretionary grants program.

Eligible Applicants

The following entities are eligible to apply for funding through this program:

- A state *(including the District of Columbia)* or group of states
- A political subdivision of a state *(local government, etc.)*
- A federally recognized tribal government
- A public transit agency or authority
- A public toll authority
- A metropolitan planning organization
- A group of two or more eligible entities listed applying through a single lead applicant *(group application)*

Merit Criteria

- Identification and Understanding of the Problem to Be Solved
- Appropriateness of Proposed Solution
- Expected Benefits

Project Readiness Criteria

Ability to Execute and Complete the Full Scope of Work in Stage 1 within 18 Months of When the Grant is Executed

- Feasibility of Workplan
- Community Engagement and Partnerships
- Leadership and Qualifications

Departmental Priorities

- Safety
- Climate Change and Sustainability
- Equity and the Justice40 Initiative
- Workforce Development, Job Quality and Wealth Creation

Application Requirements

Cover Page

Project Narrative: should not exceed 7 pages *(does not include Appendices),*

- Overview/Project Description *(1-2 pages)*
- Project Location *(1 paragraph)*
- Community Impact *(1 paragraph)*
- Technical Merit Overview *(2 pages)*
- Project Readiness Overview *(2 pages)*

Appendices

- Appendix I — Resumes *(3 pages or less)*
- Appendix II — Summary Budget Narrative *(3 pages or less)*
- Appendix III — Letters of Commitment *(no more than 2 pages per letter, no more than 10 pages in total)*

Applications are due on Friday, July 12, 2024 by 5:00 p.m. ET.

HDR's Infrastructure Finance and grant writing professionals stand by ready to support project sponsors applying for funding from the SMART program.

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