

FY 2021 HP NOFO Funding Conference Q&A

February 11, 2021

Projects

- Can you address how to fill out the 424a if you have more than 4 projects? The 424 and 424a will not match.
 - The 424a form will support up to four projects. If additional projects are proposed an additional 424a form will need to be downloaded to include the additional projects.
 - If multiple 424a forms are used, the auto-calculation feature does not work between the multiple forms. The applicant must manually calculate the forms to confirm the grand total matches the 424 – Box 18. FMCSA reviewers will be doing the same.
 - **Multiple 424a forms can be used only for HP-CMV projects.**
 - **The HP-ITD NOFO limits the number of projects to a maximum of four projects per application. If more than four are submitted then only the first four will be considered for funding.**

- Can you go over the difference between a project and a priority?
 - The FY21 High Priority priorities are listed in the FY21 HP-CMV and FY21 HP-ITD NOFOs.
 - A project may consist of one or more priorities that work together to achieve a defined goal.

- Are there benefits to having distinct projects vs one large project?
 - Individual projects allow you to provide details specific to the objective and activities associated with each project's problem statement. This allows FMCSA to review each project based on its merits.
 - Each project submitted in an application will be evaluated individually and independently. By including multiple projects in an application, one or more of the projects may be partially or not funded, avoiding the rejection of the entire application.

- How is a "project" defined on the 424a. Would an HP CMV project that has both aggressive driving and vehicle inspections need those functions separated into different "projects"?
 - Section A of the 424a provides four rows. Individual rows are used for individual project information. Section B of the 424a provides individual columns to be used for each project's information. Please refer to the 424a instructions included with the download of the form for complete information.
 - A project consists of one or more priorities that work toward achieving a defined goal. The activities mentioned in this question do not necessarily need to be separated into different projects, although, an applicant may choose to submit them as separate projects.

- For the HP-ITD is it acceptable to submit multiple applications if you have more than 4 projects?
 - Yes

- Please clarify whether the 5-page limit for each section is per project, or aggregate for the entire application.
 - It is per application so it would not be per project. If you have three projects, in your application you would still have to adhere to the page limit per application. Please see **Section D – Application and Submission Information** for complete details.
- Must I submit one grant application for two projects or may I submit two applications, one for each?
 - You have the option to submit one application with two projects, or two applications, one for each project.
- If I submit an application with multiple projects, will these projects be evaluated individually and independently? In other words, is it possible to fund one and deny another for example?
 - Yes, each project submitted in an application will be evaluated individually and independently. An application might have one or more of the projects awarded or not awarded.
- CMV has PRISM, SSDQ and Traditional CMV; what type of projects would be listed under ITD?
 - There are two High Priority Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFO): 1) FM-MHP-21-001 - HP-CMV NOFO contains PRISM, SSDQ and Traditional CMV priorities; and 2) FM-MHP-21-002 - HP-ITD NOFO contains ITD priorities.

Activities

- Is attending the Annual ITD Program Manager Meeting an eligible activity?
 - Yes, it is eligible as ITD O&M under HP-ITD or MCSAP.
- Section III of the CMV NOFO has 7 activities; if our project is CMV safety and enforcement would that be our project and the 7 activities would be our priorities, but we would only have one project, is that correct?
 - A High Priority CMV project can include one or more of the priorities listed in the HP CMV NOFO. It is not a requirement to include all priorities in a project or application.
- Can grant funds be used to rent vehicles to conduct covert and overt monitoring if properly justified in the grant?
 - Please refer to the MCP, High Priority section 4.0, for eligible program expenses. Sufficient justification must be included in the application, including need for the rental equipment, the specific use, and related performance metrics.

Budgets

- Do the match and federal funding need to be broken down by project or for the amount of the entire application?
 - Both. The Budget Narrative table needs to show the 85/15 breakdown for each project budget category, and the comprehensive budget needs to show the 85/15 breakdown for the entire project(s).

- Is match allowed across projects or does it have to be within a single project?
 - The preferred option is to show match per project since projects are evaluated individually. If all match is in a project that does not get funded, then the funded projects will need to be reduced so that the 85/15 requirement is met.

- Must all match be accrued during the grant period of performance?
 - Yes

- Is the match guidance changing for ITD grants? In past years for ITD grant, match had to be project-specific rather than across the application?
 - The match guidance for HP-ITD has been consistent with HP-CMV since the passage of the FAST Act. It was project specific when the CVISN grant program was available.

- In the budget narrative for personnel, can we add a column for # of years?
 - Yes, as long as budget narrative totals correspond with the 424 and 424a and the budget narrative justification can be easily understood.

- IT projects have a match, I thought all IT projects were 100 percent?
 - Most HP priorities are 85/15. There are very few 100% HP priorities. Please refer to the HP-CMV and/or the HP-ITD NOFO for specific match requirements.

- Appendix B: Budget Narrative - Slight difference in the Fringe Budget Narrative table shown as a sample and the one in the Standard Budget Template FY2021 document included in the NOFO packet. Which should be use?
 - Use the sample in Appendix B which includes the % of time (only difference). This allows for us to understand the math when calculated left to right.

- Should applicants include indirect cost information/details in the budget narrative? Or just on the 424A?
 - All 424a budget line items must be supported in the Budget Narrative. Indirect Cost information should be outlined in the Budget Narrative “Other” category table. Please refer to Appendix B of the NOFO for more details.

- If submitting multiple ITD applications, can each application total a max of \$2 million, or is a state limited to \$2 million max, regardless of number of applications.
 - Federal funding for each award (per application) is \$2M max. Multiple applications may be submitted by a State so long as each application does not exceed the \$2M cap.

- In the budget narrative under “work year hours” do we put hours for entire 3 years or just 1 year, I would just like to understand how the narrative would match total in 424.
 - Total project hours need to be included in the Budget Narrative, which needs to match the 424a. If there are multiple projects, each project must have a Budget Narrative and a comprehensive budget including all project budget totals, which must match the 424a. Please keep in mind the period of performance for each of the NOFOs. This information is found in the NOFO and in the section below.

Period of Performance

- What is the period of performance for this grant?
 - HP-CMV – POP is the Federal FY in which the award is made plus **two** additional fiscal years.
 - HP-ITD – POP is the Federal FY in which the award is made plus **four** additional fiscal years.
 - The Federal Fiscal Year = October 1 thru September 30
- Regarding data--will the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on 2020 activity be taken into consideration regarding data?
 - Yes. Please include how COVID-19 has impacted the 2020 activity in a previously awarded grant.
- Back to performance period, we typically have 4 years on an ask. It sounded like for this NOFO it would be more like 2 1/2 years?
 - HP-CMV – POP is the Federal FY in which the award is made plus **two** additional fiscal years.
 - HP-ITD – POP is the Federal FY in which the award is made plus **four** additional fiscal years.

MISC

- Will the proposals go out for external review/panel? Or are they reviewed within FMCSA?
 - Applications are reviewed by FMCSA Subject Matter Experts. Please see **Section E – Application Review Information** for Merit Review Process details.
- We were denied last year. Are we able to receive feedback on that application? If we submit an application and are denied can we receive feedback on why we were denied?
 - Yes. Feedback is provided in a letter sent to the authorized official listed in the 424 form. Feedback is also available from your State's FMCSA Division.
- This would be the first time applying for this NOFO - can you explain what the following means with more specificity –

“In addition to the performance indicators above, all States have specific performance indicators tailored to their State performance goals included in the State's Program Plan/Top Level Design (PP/TLD). FMCSA approves each of these PP/TLDs. The PP/TLD is a technical document that provides management framework and system architecture to guide program deployment and to advise policy and decision makers regarding the funding and technical resources required for successful program implementation. The PP/TLD describes the various systems and networks at the State level that must be refined, revised, upgraded, or built to accomplish Core or Expanded capabilities. This State submitted PP/TLD are tailored to each State's performance goals, projects to achieve those goals, performance indicators, and schedules and milestones. Grant applications should, where possible, relate their application performance goals to their currently approved PP/TLD.” It is from the NOFO - Just need to relay it to IT.

 - A PP/TLD (Program Plan/Top Level Design) is required to be approved as part of before your application for any HP-ITD award. The approval letter is a required document as part of the application package which certifies the State has an approved PP/TLD for the

projects applying for. As an example, if you are submitting an HP-ITD application for 4 projects, those projects have to be in the approved PP/TLD. If the State is opting not to apply for an HP-ITD award in FY21, you do not need an approved PP/TLD to apply for other FMCSA grant opportunities.

- If submitting multiple ITD applications, can a state indicate which app is higher priority, in the case that funding is insufficient to fund multiple applications for a single state.
 - Each application is reviewed separately based on its merit. If by chance each application is considered for an award, an indication of a State's priority would be useful to the Program Office.
- Can you please send us information for the webinar of February 18th or do we get that from our State or Division Administrator from FMCSA? Thank-you.
 - The webinar on 2/18 is for the FY21 CDLPI grant program funding conference. Please refer to the program point of contact listed in that NOFO for information.
 - The conference registration link is available on grants.gov. Funding Opportunity FM-CDL-21-001, tab entitled Related Documents.
- Would it look negative on a new grant application if you request an extension on a FY2019 grant to complete the projects and adjust the new FY21 grant?
 - No. This is an option that has been given to all FY2019 awardees impacted by COVID-19.

COVID

- If we are still not able to travel due to COVID-19, are we still able to transfer those funds to another part of the application project?
 - Yes. For assistance with an amendment request, please contact your award's FMCSA Grant Manager.
- Due to COVID-19 a portion of 2020 project was placed on hold. This portion was roadside work done by the inspectors. Can you use COVID-19 in the narrative to explain why the spend down and results from the 2020 did not meet what you put in your plan. Can you then try and continue with similar work in 2022?

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 signed into law by the President on December 27, 2020, provides extensions to the period of performance (POP) to recipients of financial assistance awards (grants and cooperative agreements) that were issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) in **fiscal years (FY) 2019 and 2020**. Concerning your FY2020 award, FMCSA will automatically process no-cost extension amendments in GrantSolutions for grants and cooperative agreements issued in FY 2020. Please contact your State's FMCSA Division for more information. This extension will allow an additional fiscal year to complete projects impacted by COVID-19.

Please note, continuation of a project is not allowable. If a similar previously awarded project is to be proposed, then the project must show how the project preformed, include new objectives and new activity goals enhancing the project. It cannot be a duplication of a previously awarded project.

Title VI

- What is required for Title VI compliance? Sorry if I missed this, i entered a few minutes late
 - Please refer to the Title VI Compliance Plan (Plan) Instructions document available on Grants.gov with the NOFO application package. All questions and Plans are to be directed to Mr. Lester Finkle, FMCSA National Title VI Program Manager @ lester.finkle@dot.gov. Plans are due by March 15th, 5pm EST.

Resources

- For new applicants are there examples or templates for a good application?
 - Yes. See the **High Priority Best Practices** document found at <https://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/StatePrograms/GrantManagement.aspx>.