



# Grant Technical Assistance Webinar 1: How to Apply for FMCSA Discretionary Grant Programs

The following questions were submitted to FMCSA by attendees during session 1 of the Discretionary Grant Program Technical Assistance Webinar Series on October 12, 2022.

## Topic 1: MCSAP

### 1. Is there also a MCSAP NOFO?

Yes, however the MCSAP (Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program) is a formula grant program, not a discretionary grant program. Today we will be discussing High Priority grant program priorities. MCSAP is only available to State lead agencies, which is designated by a State's governor. Every fiscal year funds are allocated to individual State lead agencies based on a specific formula. If you would like information about MCSAP, please go our website at [www.fmcsa.dot.gov](http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov).

## Topic 2: Title VI

### 1. If we need to go through the State lead agency, because of Title VI or other issues, do we shift to that source of funds?

We would need more information to fully address your questions. You could contact your State's the lead agency to discuss the possibility of participating as a subgrantee under their MCSAP grant. Another option would be to apply for High Priority grant funds which is available to non-lead agencies and other types of entities. Do you mind me asking what entity you're from, or what state?

**[participant response]** The Texas Department of Public Safety would be the lead, but the funding would flow to the university. We're not positive we can meet the Title VI obligations.

You would still need to have the Title VI as a subgrantee. I suggest reviewing the recording of the Title VI program webinar for details, [www.fmcsa.dot.gov/grantswebinars](http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/grantswebinars), then contacting Lester Finkle at [Lester.Finkle@dot.gov](mailto:Lester.Finkle@dot.gov) with your questions.

**[participant response]** I believe we meet Title VI. It's the way that it's phrased under this administration that is confusing. We might not be able to get the president to sign off on certain things here at the university, then we would flow through the already cleared Title VI documentation of our Department of Public Safety.



Again, it's best to address all options with Lester Finkle.

## Topic 3: FY23 NOFO

### **1. The FY22 HP CMV Safety related activities and projects NOFO has not hit the street, correct?**

The FY22 High Priority grant awards have been released. We're in the process of finalizing the FY23 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), which should be posted at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) around late November, early December timeframe. Detailed information about the Grants.gov website was provided during Webinar 1: How to Apply. Recording of this webinar can be found at [www.fmcsa.dot.gov/grantswebinars](http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/grantswebinars).

### **2. What takes precedence, the instructions in a NOFO or the instructions in one of the family of forms documents?**

Instructions in the NOFO takes precedence. We don't deviate much at all from the instructions in the forms. However, the NOFO outlines the exceptions.

### **3. Do we copy and paste the budget template into the budget narrative or upload them separately?**

The budget template can be copied and pasted into the application, or it can be uploaded.

## Topic 4: Grants

### **1. Can my non-profit receive a grant for a CMV safety demonstration and educational project which will be implemented in multiple regions across the country?**

It's hard to answer a question like this without reviewing the application. I'm sorry I can't give you a direct yes or no. Nonprofits are eligible but must also meet the specific eligibility criteria. Additionally, FMCSA would need to evaluate the application to confirm priority, narrative, budget, and other review requirements are met. Allowability, necessity, allocability, and reasonableness are also evaluated.

**[participant response]** I just wanted to know if I would be eligible because I'm not doing it from just one state.

So, you're in a nonprofit and your project would reach out to different States?

**[participant response]** Right. We plan to do a crash test tour across the United States and have the event be in different regions of the United States.

Again, I can't say yes or no because we would need to see the application.



**[participant response]** We're starting to develop the plans. Can we have some of it under way before we are successfully receiving a grant? Can we already start the project? Or we wouldn't be able to start the project until we receive the grant funds.

Expenses incurred prior to notification of award is the responsibility of the applicant regardless of whether or not an award is made. An application is required to be submitted by the due date, meet eligibility criteria, and go through the merit review process as outlined in the NOFO to be considered for funding. There is no guarantee of award when applying for a discretionary grant.

**[participant response]** And then, once an award is made, is the period of performance the day that it was awarded?

The period of performance start date is determined when funding recommendations have been officially approved. This is usually a short period prior to when award notifications are released to awardees. The end of the period of performance is dependent on the selected Grant program.

**[participant response]** Just to clarify, as I mentioned, we are planning some crash test events, and the first one we're aiming at would be in April of 2023, which would be before the Grant period would start.

Correct. The award is not expected to be finalized until later in the summer.

**[participant response]** If we had some other funds to get started in April with funds from other sources, would that make the project eligible if we've already started?

Possibly, again it all dependent on how the application is written. Since it sounds like you're going to have different funding sources and the application would need to be clear as to what those sources are in the involvement in the project. Keep in mind, there is no guarantee of award when applying for a discretionary grant. Projects started prior to award are done at the applicant's own risk.

## Topic 5: SAM

### **1. Does renewal for SAM occur in the beginning of the calendar year for SAM or a year from the date you first applied?**

It's a year from the date you first applied. This is the date that you first received your number and registration, and then a year in advance from that. You need to be mindful of that when your expiration is coming up.

### **2. Do you provide a template for the notarized letter needed for SAM?**

The System for Award Management (SAM) is an Official U.S. Government system and is not a FMCSA managed system. However, we can provide you a link to the template you're requesting:



[https://www.fsd.gov/gsafsd\\_sp?id=gsafsd\\_kb\\_articles&sys\\_id=b30873411b59d9543565ed3ce54bcb6a](https://www.fsd.gov/gsafsd_sp?id=gsafsd_kb_articles&sys_id=b30873411b59d9543565ed3ce54bcb6a)

Please go to <https://sam.gov> for additional information.