

# RAIL

*MOVING AMERICA FORWARD*



## FY 2022 Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program (FSP-National) NOFO Webinar

**Presented by:**

Bryan Rodda • Doug Gascon • Sergio Coronado • Michael Johnson • Laura Shick



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Railroad Administration

December 15, 2022

# FRA Presenters



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# Agenda

- 1 Partnership Program Overview
- 2 How to Apply
- 3 Best Practices
  - Project Narrative
  - Statement of Work
  - Benefit-Cost Analysis
  - Environmental Readiness
- 4 Q & A

# Fed-State Partnership Program Overview— National

# Program Purpose & Funding Overview

## Purpose

- The Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program (FSP) funds capital projects that reduce the state of good repair backlog, improve performance, expand or establish new intercity passenger rail service, or enhance rail safety. This Notice is for projects not located on the Northeast Corridor (FSP-National).

## Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

- Published in the Federal Register on December 7, 2022
  - **\$2.283 billion available** in FY 2022 supplemental advance and annual appropriations
  - Applications due by **5 pm ET on March 7, 2023**
- Concurrent applications and resubmissions are allowed
  - Indicate other program(s) you may have applied to (e.g., CRISI, RAISE)

# Program Changes Under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)

Federal-State Partnership Program Changes	
<b>New Eligibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adds “Federally recognized Indian Tribe” as an eligible applicant</li> <li>• Allows projects <b>to expand or establish new intercity passenger rail service</b></li> <li>• Allows projects <b>on privately owned railroad lines</b> used by intercity passenger rail</li> </ul>
<b>Modified Selection Preferences</b>	<p><b>Adds preferences for projects:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That improve the financial performance, reliability, service frequency, or address the state of good repair of an Amtrak route</li> <li>• That are identified in, and consistent with, a corridor inventory prepared under the Corridor Identification and Development Program (once available)</li> </ul> <p><b>Removes preference</b> for 50 percent or greater non-Federal match</p>
<b>Phased Funding Agreements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New tool available allowing the Secretary to enter into a <b>multi-year funding agreement</b> for a project under certain circumstances</li> </ul>
<b>National / NEC Funding Splits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Supplemental Advance Appropriations:</b> At least 33 percent (<i>\$12 billion</i>) for projects not located on the NEC</li> <li>• <b>Annual Appropriations:</b> not less than 45 percent for awards to non-NEC projects and not less than 45 percent for NEC projects, with 10 percent that can be awarded to either geography</li> </ul>

# Program Eligibility

## Eligible Applicants

- States (*incl. the District of Columbia*)
- Groups of States
- Interstate Compacts
- Public agencies or publicly chartered authorities established by one or more States
- Political subdivisions of States
- Amtrak, acting on its own behalf or under a cooperative agreement with one or more States
- Federally recognized Indian Tribe **New in BIL**
- Any combination of the above

***Selection preference:** Projects for which Amtrak is not the sole applicant*

***Ineligible entities** (e.g., private sector firms): May be included as a **partner** on an application submitted by one or more eligible applicants*

# Program Eligibility

## Eligible Projects

- A project to **replace, rehabilitate, or repair** infrastructure, equipment, or a facility **used for providing intercity passenger rail service** to bring such assets into a state of good repair
- A project **to improve intercity passenger rail service performance**, including reduced trip times, increased train frequencies, higher operating speeds, improved reliability, expanded capacity, reduced congestion, electrification, and other improvements, as determined by the Secretary
- A project **to expand or establish new intercity passenger rail service** **New in BIL**
- A **group of related projects** described above
- The **planning, environmental studies, and final design** for a project or group of projects described above **New in BIL**

***Capital Project:** Acquiring, constructing, improving, or inspecting rail equipment, track and track structures, or a rail facility...including acquiring rights-of-way.*

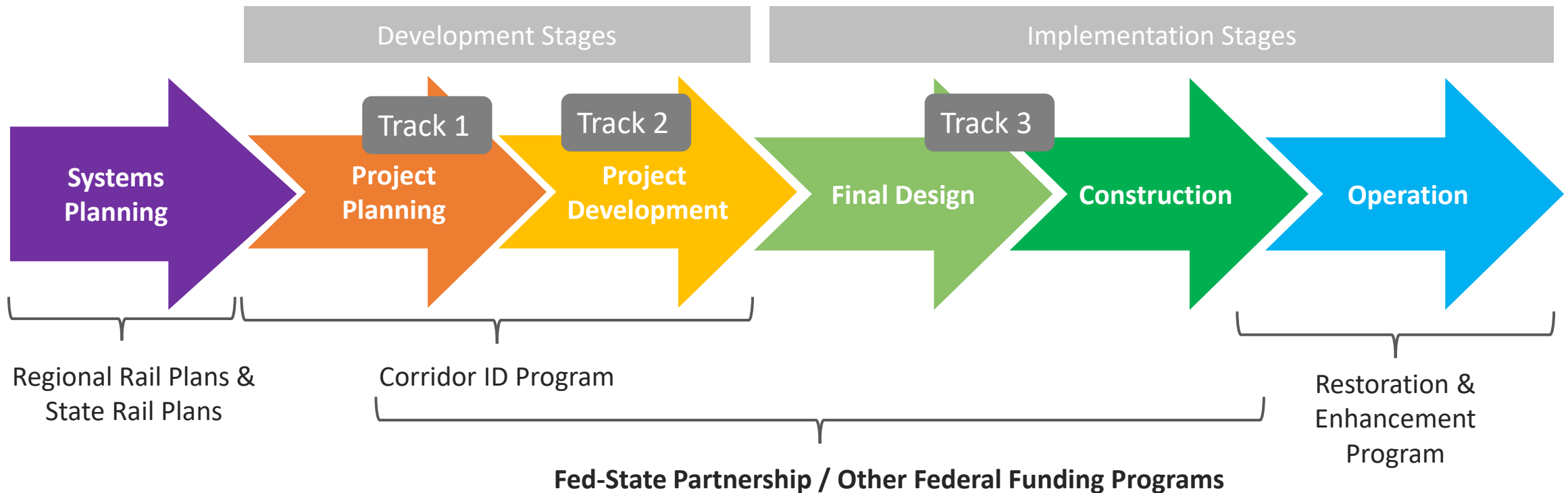
***Major Capital Project:** Project with a capital cost estimate of \$500 million or greater and with at least \$100 million in Federal assistance received or requested under the FSP program.*



# FSP-National and Lifecycle Stages

## Lifecycle Stage

- The consecutive stages of a capital project as it is developed and implemented that include Systems Planning, Project Planning, Project Development, Final Design, Construction, and Operation



# Key Program Definitions

## Commuter Rail Passenger Transportation (CR)

- **Short-haul rail passenger transportation in metropolitan and suburban areas** usually having reduced fare, multiple rides, and commuter tickets, and morning and evening peak period operations, consistent with 49 U.S.C. 24102(3); the term does not include rapid transit operations in an urban area that are not connected to the general railroad system of transportation

## Intercity Passenger Rail Transportation (IPR)

- **Rail passenger transportation, except commuter rail passenger transportation.** See 49 U.S.C. 24911(a)(2). In this NOFO, “Intercity Passenger Rail Service” and “Intercity Passenger Rail Transportation” are equivalent terms to “Intercity Rail Passenger Transportation.”

## Northeast Corridor (NEC)

- The **main rail line between Boston, MA, and the District of Columbia**, and branch lines to Harrisburg, PA, Springfield, MA, and Spuyten Duyvil, NY
- The FSP-National NOFO is **for projects not located on the NEC**. A separate FSP NOFO will be issued for NEC projects.

# Program Eligibility

## Non-Federal Match Requirements

### Requirements

- Federal share of total costs for a project **shall not exceed 80 percent**
- A **minimum 20 percent (20%) non-Federal share** is required. Applications failing to demonstrate sufficient non-Federal match are ineligible.
- If Amtrak is an applicant, Amtrak may use ticket and other revenues generated from its operations and other non-Federal sources to satisfy the non-Federal share requirements

### Process

- Identify the source(s) of matching and other funds and clearly and distinctly reflect these funds in project budget
- Cash and in-kind contributions are permitted, consistent with 2 CFR Part 200
- Include funding commitment letters outlining funding agreements as attachments or in an appendix

# Program Evaluation & Selection Criteria

## Evaluation Criteria

- **Technical Merit:** Quality of statement of work and application materials; readiness and completion of Capital Project Lifecycle prerequisites; applicant past performance, technical capacity, and financial contributions; private-sector participation; qualifications and experience of key personnel and organizations; and consistency with planning documents
- **Project Benefits:** benefit-cost analysis; effects on system and service performance (**incl. as measured by FRA's metrics & minimum standards for IPR rule**); effects on safety, competitiveness, reliability, trip time, and resilience; improved modal integration; ability to meet current or anticipated demand; **anticipated positive economic and employment impacts in areas near stations, historic districts or other opportunity zones; and whether project services historically unconnected or under-connected communities.**

New in BIL

## Selection Preferences

- Amtrak is not sole applicant
- Improves the **financial performance, reliability, service frequency, or address the state of good repair** of an Amtrak route
- **Identified in, and consistent with, a corridor inventory** prepared under FRA's Corridor Identification and Development Program (*to be implemented in future FSP-National NOFOs*)

New in BIL

# Program Evaluation & Selection Criteria

## Key Departmental Objectives

DOT will assess the project's ability to meet one or more of these objectives. Such considerations can include, but are not limited to, the extent to which an application promotes:

### ***Safety***

Improves safety at highway-rail grade crossings, reduces incidences of rail-related trespassing, and upgrades infrastructure to achieve a higher level of safety.

### ***Equitable economic growth and job creation***

Invests in vital infrastructure assets and provides opportunities for families to achieve economic security through rail industry employment.

### ***Climate Change and Sustainability***

Reduces emissions, promotes energy efficiency, increases resiliency, and recycles or redevelops existing infrastructure.

### ***Equity and Barriers to Opportunity***

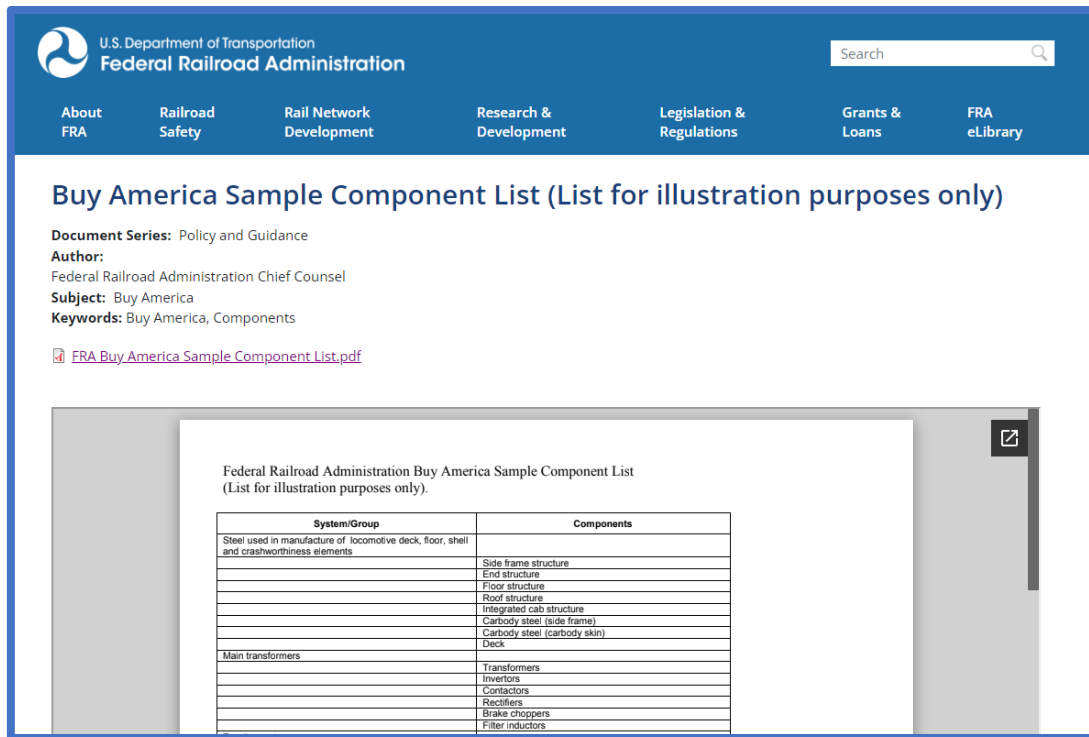
Includes a plan to incorporate small businesses as part of project completion and take account of a community engagement efforts designed to reach impacted communities and how community feedback is considered in decision making.

### ***Transformation of our nation's transportation infrastructure***

Adds capacity to congested corridors, builds new connections or attracts new users to passenger rail, and ensures assets will be improved to a state of good repair.

# FRA Buy America

FRA Buy America includes **new** requirements enacted by the **Build America, Buy America (BABA) Act**



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Railroad Administration

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### Buy America Sample Component List (List for illustration purposes only)

**Document Series:** Policy and Guidance  
**Author:** Federal Railroad Administration Chief Counsel  
**Subject:** Buy America  
**Keywords:** Buy America, Components

[FRA Buy America Sample Component List.pdf](#)

System/Group	Components
Steel used in manufacture of locomotive deck, floor, shell and crashworthiness elements	Side frame structure
	End structure
	Floor structure
	Roof structure
	Integrated cab structure
	Carbody steel (side frame)
	Carbody steel (carbody skin)
Main transformers	Deck
	Transformers
	Invertors
	Convertors
	Rectifiers
	Brake choppers
	Filter inductors

<https://railroads.dot.gov/legislation-regulations/buy-america/buy-america>



For FRA-funded Projects - the steel, iron, construction materials, and manufactured goods used in the project must be produced in the United States



FRA Buy America applies to materials purchased with FRA funds and with non-Federal funds



Consider FRA Buy America requirements in project planning, design, and budget



Include FRA Buy America requirements in all procurement documents and obtain any necessary certifications to document compliance



FRA encourages applicants who might seek a waiver to develop and submit a domestic sourcing plan as part of their application

# FRA Buy America – Domestic Sourcing Plan

The domestic sourcing plan should include:



Detail on the extent to which the systems covered by the waiver are to be imported and the extent to which such systems can be sourced domestically



Explanation of how the recipient anticipates making use of domestic sources for maintenance and replacement of initially imported goods and materials used in the project



Explanation of the number of domestic jobs, temporary and permanent, that will be generated by the project and outline a plan to transition any foreign labor responsibilities to domestic jobs



## Other Requirements & Restrictions

- **Pre-award costs** incurred prior to selection, without an FRA NEPA determination, or without prior FRA written approval are unallowable
- FRA is prohibited from providing Partnership Program grants for Commuter Rail Passenger Transportation (*under 49 U.S.C. 24405(f)*)
  - FRA's **primary intent in the FSP program is to make reasonable investments in Intercity Passenger Rail transportation**. Such projects **may be located on shared corridors** where Commuter Rail Passenger Transportation and/or freight rail also benefit.
  - When applying for a shared benefit project, clearly demonstrate how the proposed project **directly benefits IPR** and that the project would be a reasonable investment in IPR, independent and separate from consideration of the proposed project's benefits to other transportation purposes.
  - FRA has provided grants in the FSP program to commuter or local transit agencies when those agencies have demonstrated their projects have reasonable intercity passenger rail benefits



# NOFO Overview & How to Apply

# What is a NOFO?

## Key Parts of a NOFO

### **A Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO):**

- Announces the grant opportunity
- Contains details about the application requirements and procedures to request Federal funding for eligible projects

# What information is in a NOFO?

## Key Parts of a NOFO

- Program Summary
- Key Dates
- Addresses
- FRA Contact Information
- Table of Contents
  - Program Description
  - Federal Award Information
  - **Eligibility Information**
  - **Application and Submission Information**
  - **Application Review Information**
  - Federal Award Administration Information
  - Federal Awarding Agency Contacts
  - Other Information

# Where do I start?

## Check the FRA **Competitive Discretionary Grant Programs** webpage

- <https://railroads.dot.gov/grants-loans/competitive-discretionary-grant-programs/competitive-discretionary-grant-programs>

United States Department of Transportation

U.S. Department of Transportation  
**Federal Railroad Administration**

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Home / Grants & Loans / Competitive Discretionary Grant Programs

### Competitive Discretionary Grant Programs

#### Accepting Applications

#### [Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program](#)

The Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program (National) makes available \$2.283 billion in FY 2022 funding for capital projects that reduce the state of good repair backlog, improve performance, or expand or establish new intercity passenger rail service. The current notice solicits applications for projects not located on the Northeast Corridor, and the funding made available is the first portion of the at least \$12 billion in total funding under the program (FY 2022–2026) for such projects. Applications are due no later than 5:00 p.m. ET, March 7, 2023. For more information about this program, please see the [FY 2022 Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail \(National\) Notice of Funding Opportunity](#).

- Register for the [FY 2022 Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program \(National\) Notice of Funding Opportunity Webinar](#) - December 15, 2022.

**Related Links**

- [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Information from FRA](#)
- [FRA Discretionary Grant](#)

Click the link to access the NOFO

# Where is the FY22 Partnership Program NOFO?

## NOFO in the Federal Register

- <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/12/07/2022-26610/notice-of-funding-opportunity-for-the-federal-state-partnership-for-intercity-passenger-rail-program>

The screenshot shows the official Federal Register entry for the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program. The notice is dated 12/07/2022 and is published by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Department of Transportation (DOT). The document is titled "Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program".

**AGENCY:**  
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

**ACTION:**  
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO or notice).

**SUMMARY:**  
This notice (FSP-National) details the application requirements and procedures to obtain grant funding for projects not located on the Northeast Corridor under the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program (FSP Program) for Fiscal Year 2022. The FSP-National notice solicits applications for FSP funds made available by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022, and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The opportunity described in this notice is made available under Assistance Listings Number 20.326, "Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail."

**DATES:**  
Applications for funding under this solicitation are due no later than 5 p.m. ET, March 7, 2023. Applications that are incomplete or received after 5 p.m. ET, on March 7, 2023 will not be considered for funding. See Section D of this notice for additional information on the application process.

**DOCUMENT DETAILS:**  
Printed version: PDF  
Publication Date: 12/07/2022  
Agencies: Federal Railroad Administration  
Dates: Applications for funding under this solicitation are due no later than 5 p.m. ET, March 7, 2023. Applications that are incomplete or received after 5 p.m. ET, on March 7, 2023 will not be considered for funding. See Section D of this notice for additional information on the application process.  
Document Type: Notice  
Document Citation: 87 FR 75119  
Page: 75119-75134 (16 pages)  
Document Number: 2022-26610

# Where do I find “How to Apply” information?

Search Grants tab on **Grants.gov**:

GRANTS.GOV **SEARCH GRANTS**

SEARCH: Grant Opportunities Enter Keyword... GO

HOME LEARN GRANTS SEARCH GRANTS APPLICANTS GRANTORS SYSTEM-TO-SYSTEM FORMS CONNECT SUPPORT

GRANTS.GOV > Search Grants

## SEARCH GRANTS

BASIC SEARCH CRITERIA:

Keyword(s): 20.326

Opportunity Number:

CFDA:

SEARCH

OPPORTUNITY STATUS:

- Forecasted (0)
- Posted (1)
- Closed (0)
- Archived (7)

SORT BY: Relevance (Descending) Update Sort

DATE RANGE: All Available Update Date Range

1 - 1 OF 1 MATCHING RESULTS:

Opportunity Number	Opportunity Title	Agency	Opportunity Status	Posted Date	Close Date
FR-FSP-23-001	FY22 Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program for projects not located on the Northeast Corridor	DOT-FRA	Posted	12/07/2022	03/07/2023

Click the **Opportunity Number** to see the Synopsis

# What is the Synopsis?

**Summary information** about the grant opportunity in Grants.gov:

The screenshot shows the Grants.gov website interface. At the top, there is a search bar with the text "SEARCH: Grant Opportunities" and a "GO" button. Below the search bar is a navigation menu with options: HOME, LEARN GRANTS, SEARCH GRANTS (highlighted), APPLICANTS, GRANTORS, SYSTEM-TO-SYSTEM, FORMS, CONNECT, and SUPPORT. The main content area is titled "VIEW GRANT OPPORTUNITY" and displays the following information:

- Grant ID: FR-FSP-23-001
- Title: FY22 Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program for projects not located on the Northeast Corridor
- Agency: Department of Transportation, DOT - Federal Railroad Administration

There are two red buttons: "Apply" and "Subscribe". Below the main information, there are four tabs: "SYNOPSIS" (highlighted with a red box), "VERSION HISTORY", "RELATED DOCUMENTS", and "PACKAGE". A "Print Synopsis Details" link is also visible.

The synopsis content is as follows:

<b>Document Type:</b> Grants Notice	<b>Version:</b> Synopsis 1
<b>Funding Opportunity Number:</b> FR-FSP-23-001	<b>Posted Date:</b> Dec 07, 2022
<b>Funding Opportunity Title:</b> FY22 Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program for projects not located on the Northeast Corridor	<b>Last Updated Date:</b> Dec 07, 2022
<b>Opportunity Category:</b> Discretionary	<b>Original Closing Date for Applications:</b> Mar 07, 2023 No Explanation
<b>Opportunity Category Explanation:</b>	<b>Current Closing Date for Applications:</b> Mar 07, 2023 No Explanation
<b>Funding Instrument Type:</b> Grant	<b>Archive Date:</b> Apr 06, 2023
<b>Category of Funding Activity:</b> Transportation	<b>Estimated Total Program Funding:</b>
	<b>Award Ceiling:</b> \$2,283,150,000

# How do I apply?

## Key Steps

- Obtain a Unique Entity Identifier
- **Register early** in the Federal government's System for Award Management (SAM)
- For Grants.gov, complete an **Authorized Organization Representative** profile and create a username and password
- Submit an application addressing all requirements outlined in the NOFO

### **NOTE:**

- **SAM registration** can take up to 2 weeks (longer if you do not have an Employer Identification Number)
- FRA does not control or have the authority to expedite SAM renewal requests
- GSA reported that as of December 6, 2022, **the average time to complete a manual review** otherwise known as Entity Validation is **thirteen (13) business days**.



# What do I include in my application?

## Required Documents

- Project Narrative
- Statement of Work
  - Scope, Schedule, Budget and Performance Measures
- Environmental Compliance (NEPA) Documentation
  - *Note: May include a draft document that requires development, review, and approval by FRA or an existing completed NEPA document approved by FRA or another Federal agency that covers the proposed project scope*
- Benefit-Cost Analysis
- Draft Use/Ownership Agreement *(if applicable)*
  - *Note: FRA requires a written agreement exist between the applicant and the railroad regarding use and ownership consistent with 49 U.S.C. 22905(c)(1) for projects using rights-of-way owned by a railroad that is not the applicant*

# What forms are required?

## Required Forms

- SF424 (Application for Federal Assistance)
  - *Either*: SF 424A or 424C – Budget info for Non-Construction OR Construction
  - *Either*: SF 424B or 424D – Assurances for Non-Construction OR for Construction
- FRA's Additional Assurances and Certifications (FRA F 30)
- FRA's Applicant Financial Capability Questionnaire (FRA F 251)
- SF LLL: Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only required if reportable Lobbying activities exist)

# Where do I find additional information and help?

Find **Additional Information** about the grant opportunity in Grants.gov at the bottom of the Synopsis page:

**Additional Information**

**Agency Name:** DOT - Federal Railroad Administration

**Description:** This program funds capital projects that reduce the state of good repair backlog, improve performance, or expand or establish new intercity passenger rail service.

**Link to Additional Information:** [FY22 Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program for projects not located on the Northeast Corridor](#)

**Grantor Contact Information:** If you have difficulty accessing the full announcement electronically, please contact:

Grants.gov Contact Center  
Phone Number: 1-800-518-4726

Hours of operation are 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The contact center is closed on federal holidays.  
[support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)

[Grants.gov Customer Support](#)

# Application Review and Selection Process

## 1. Intake and Eligibility

Each application is reviewed for completeness and eligibility to determine which applications move to the evaluation stage



## 2. Evaluation

Each complete and eligible application is evaluated by a panel of DOT subject matter experts using criteria outlined in the NOFO



## 3. Selection

Final funding decisions are made by taking into account the evaluation and selection criteria outlined in the NOFO

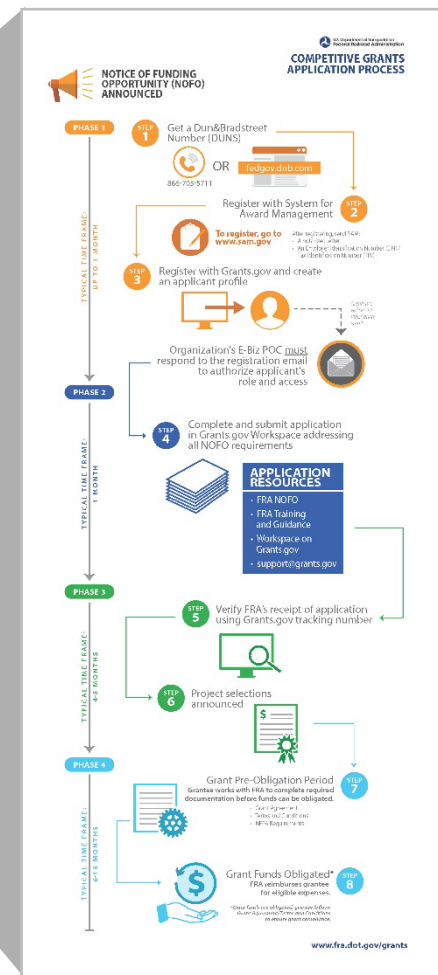
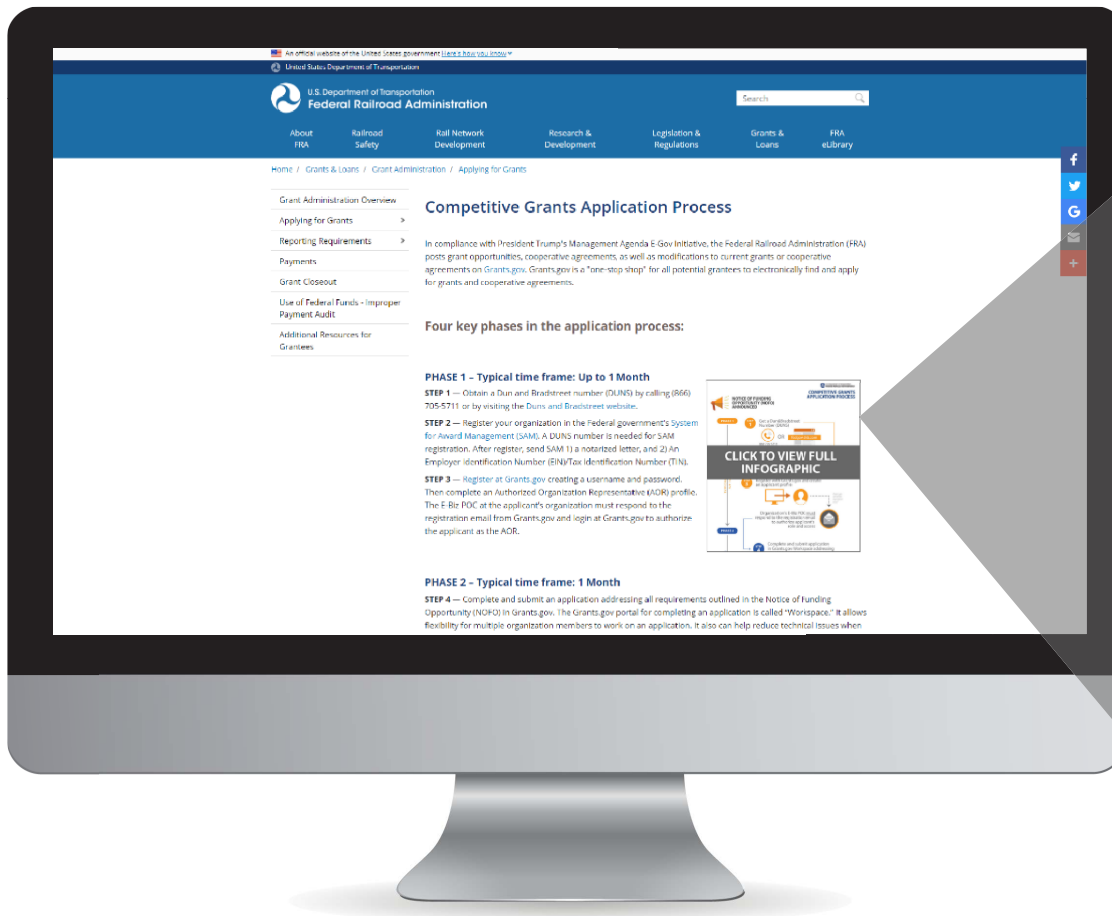


## 4. Announcement

FRA press release announces selections approximately 7 to 9 months following application due date

# Grant Application Process

## FRA's [Competitive Grants Application Process](#) webpage



# Best Practices

# Best Practices & Helpful Hints

- ✓ Read the NOFO completely and carefully to understand the criteria for eligibility and selection, and what information each application must include
- ✓ FRA has identified several focus areas where applications that are not selected often demonstrate deficiencies:
  - Project Narrative
  - Statement of Work (SOW)
  - Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA)
  - Environmental Readiness



**Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program**

A Notice by the Federal Railroad Administration on 12/07/2022

**PUBLISHED DOCUMENT**

**AGENCY:**  
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

**ACTION:**  
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO or notice).

**SUMMARY:**  
This notice (FSP-National) details the application requirements and procedures to obtain grant funding for projects not located on the Northeast Corridor under the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program (FSP Program) for Fiscal Year 2022. The FSP-National notice solicits applications for FSP funds made available by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022, and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The opportunity described in this notice is made available under Assistance Listings Number 20.326, "Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail."

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**DOCUMENT DETAILS**

Printed version:  
PDF

Publication Date:  
12/07/2022

Agencies:  
[Federal Railroad Administration](#)

Dates:  
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Document Type:  
Notice

Document Citation:  
87 FR 75119

Page:  
75119-75134 (16 pages)

Document Number:  
2022-26610

# Best Practices— Project Narrative



# Best Practices – Project Narrative

## Project Narrative Outline

- I. Cover Page
- II. Project Summary
- III. Project Funding
- IV. Applicant Eligibility Criteria
- V. Project Eligibility Criteria
- VI. Detailed Project Description
- VII. Project Location
- VIII. Grade Crossing Information, if applicable
- IX. Evaluation and Selection Criteria
- X. Project Implementation and Management
- XI. Environmental Readiness

- ✓ Structure your project narrative in accordance with the outline specified in the NOFO
- ✓ Include all elements identified in the outline
- ✓ Follow the instructions for each element
- ✓ Adhere to 25-page limit – Cover Page does not count against limit

# Best Practices – Project Narrative

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- ☑ Indicate if an application for the project has been submitted previously to another Federal grant program—include the program and year, lead applicant, project cost, lifecycle stage, intercity route benefitting, infrastructure owner

# Best Practices – Project Narrative

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- ☑ Briefly describe the project in **4 to 6 sentences**, its anticipated benefits, and the transportation challenges the project will address
- ☑ Think of this section of the application **as your elevator pitch for the project** to the DOT Secretary and FRA Administrator

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- ✓ Only include eligible costs
- ✓ Specify each source of non-Federal match
- ✓ Provide details about in-kind match
- ✓ Indicate public- vs. private-sector match
- ✓ Describe the non-Federal funding arrangements
- ✓ Attach funding commitment letters
- ✓ Identify if the proposed match will not be available until a certain date or if funds must be spent by a deadline

# Best Practices – Project Narrative

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- ☑ Thoroughly discuss the transportation challenges and benefits
- ☑ Include data to support project benefits
- ☑ Describe how project components are related and will be sequenced
- ☑ Include photographs or diagrams
- ☑ Identify all host railroads, operators, and beneficiaries

# Best Practices – Project Narrative

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- ☑ Identify cities, counties, and states where project is located
- ☑ Include a map of the project
- ☑ Identify railroad mileposts
- ☑ For grade crossing projects, include the U.S. DOT National Highway-Rail Crossing Inventory number
- ☑ Geospatial data—longitude and latitude

# Best Practices – Project Narrative

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- ☑ Cite specific DOT National Grade Crossing Inventory information, including:
  - Railroad that owns infrastructure
  - Primary railroad operator
  - DOT crossing inventory number
  - Roadway at the crossing

# Best Practices – Project Narrative

## Project Narrative Outline

- I. Cover Page
- II. Project Summary
- III. Project Funding
- IV. Applicant Eligibility Criteria
- V. Project Eligibility Criteria
- VI. Detailed Project Description
- VII. Project Location
- VIII. Grade Crossing Information
- IX. Evaluation and Selection Criteria**
- X. Project Implementation and Management
- XI. Environmental Readiness

- ☑ Include a separate section in the project narrative focused on how the project meets each of the evaluation and selection criteria
- ☑ **DO NOT** rely solely on the contents of the “detailed project description” section to satisfy this requirement— it is OK to repeat key points in this section
- ☑ Quantify benefits whenever possible



# Best Practices – Project Narrative

## Project Narrative Outline

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- X. Project Implementation and Management**
- XI. Environmental Readiness

- ✓ Highlight applicant’s past experiences managing and overseeing similar projects, including FRA- or DOT-funded projects
- ✓ Describe expected arrangements for project contracting, contract oversight, change-order management, risk management, and conformance with Federal requirements for progress reporting
- ✓ FD projects applying for funding must resolve remaining uncertainties or risks associated with changes to the design and scope of the Capital Project

# Best Practices – Project Narrative

## Project Narrative Outline

- I. Cover Page
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- VI. Detailed Project Description
- VII. Project Location
- VIII. Grade Crossing Information
- IX. Evaluation and Selection Criteria
- X. Project Implementation and Management
- XI. Environmental Readiness**

\*For more information on the NEPA process, see relevant webinars on FRA's [Webinars webpage](#).

- For Track 1/Track 2 Grant Applications:
  - Provide draft NEPA document, if possible
  - Identify any planning or environmental analyses done to date

# Best Practices – Project Narrative

## Project Narrative Outline

- I. Cover Page
- II. Project Summary
- III. Project Funding
- IV. Applicant Eligibility Criteria
- V. Project Eligibility Criteria
- VI. Detailed Project Description
- VII. Project Location
- VIII. Grade Crossing Information
- IX. Evaluation and Selection Criteria
- X. Project Implementation and Management
- XI. Environmental Readiness**

\*For more information on the NEPA process, see relevant webinars on FRA's [Webinars webpage](#).

- ☑ For Track 3 FD/Construction Grant Application:
  - Provide copy of or weblink to completed NEPA document
  - Identify environmental permits or approvals that may be needed from others besides FRA
  - Provide status, expected completion date, and/or copy of permits or approvals

# Best Practices— Statement of Work

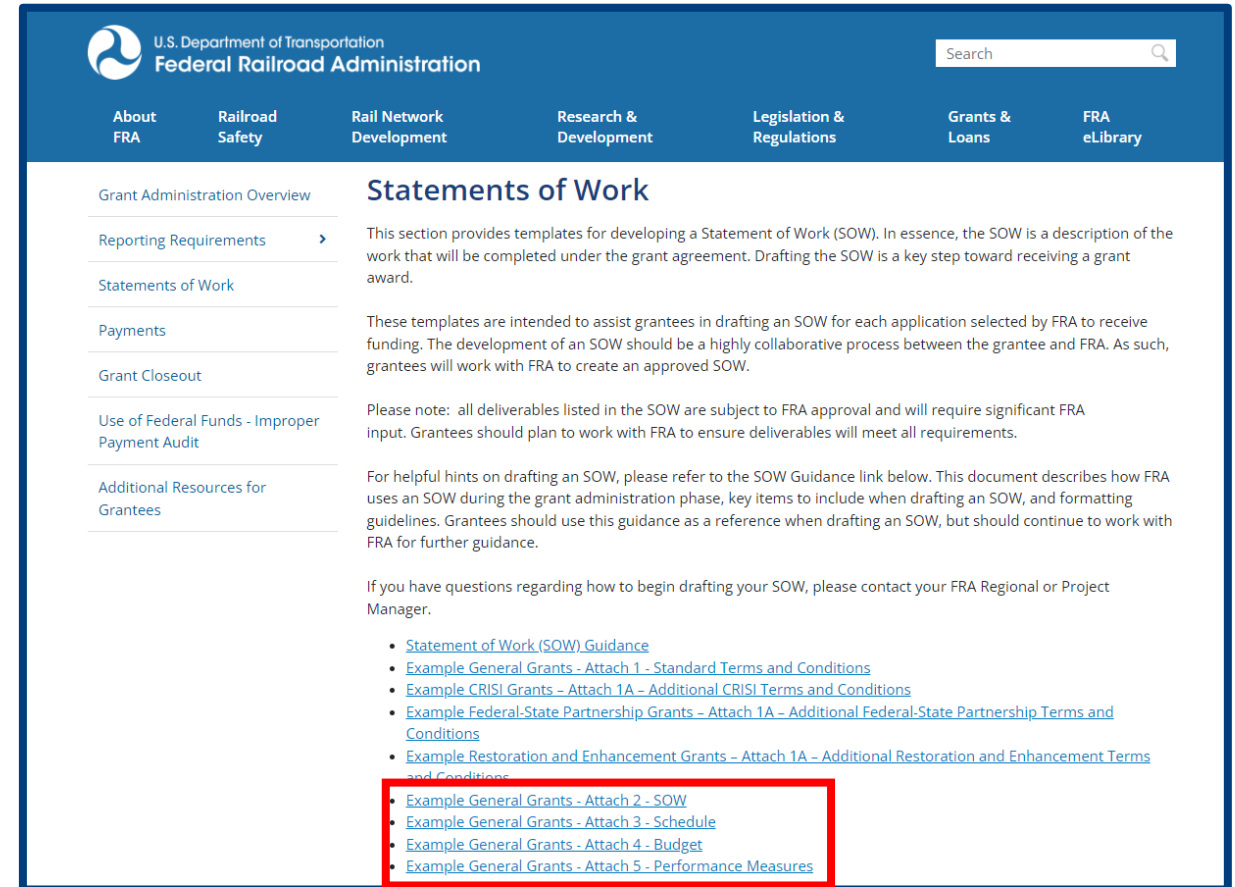
# Best Practices – Statement of Work

☑ See FRA's Statements of Work webpage:

<https://railroads.dot.gov/grants-loans/grant-administration/statements-work>

☑ Use templates for the

- SOW (Attachment 2)
- Schedule (Attachment 3)
- Budget (Attachment 4)
- Performance Measures (Attachment 5)



The screenshot shows the Federal Railroad Administration's website for Statements of Work. The header includes the U.S. Department of Transportation logo and the text "U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration". A search bar is located in the top right. The navigation menu includes "About FRA", "Railroad Safety", "Rail Network Development", "Research & Development", "Legislation & Regulations", "Grants & Loans", and "FRA eLibrary". The main content area is titled "Statements of Work" and contains the following text:

**Grant Administration Overview**

- Reporting Requirements
- Statements of Work
- Payments
- Grant Closeout
- Use of Federal Funds - Improper Payment Audit
- Additional Resources for Grantees

**Statements of Work**

This section provides templates for developing a Statement of Work (SOW). In essence, the SOW is a description of the work that will be completed under the grant agreement. Drafting the SOW is a key step toward receiving a grant award.

These templates are intended to assist grantees in drafting an SOW for each application selected by FRA to receive funding. The development of an SOW should be a highly collaborative process between the grantee and FRA. As such, grantees will work with FRA to create an approved SOW.

Please note: all deliverables listed in the SOW are subject to FRA approval and will require significant FRA input. Grantees should plan to work with FRA to ensure deliverables will meet all requirements.

For helpful hints on drafting an SOW, please refer to the SOW Guidance link below. This document describes how FRA uses an SOW during the grant administration phase, key items to include when drafting an SOW, and formatting guidelines. Grantees should use this guidance as a reference when drafting an SOW, but should continue to work with FRA for further guidance.

If you have questions regarding how to begin drafting your SOW, please contact your FRA Regional or Project Manager.

- [Statement of Work \(SOW\) Guidance](#)
- [Example General Grants - Attach 1 - Standard Terms and Conditions](#)
- [Example CRISI Grants - Attach 1A - Additional CRISI Terms and Conditions](#)
- [Example Federal-State Partnership Grants - Attach 1A - Additional Federal-State Partnership Terms and Conditions](#)
- [Example Restoration and Enhancement Grants - Attach 1A - Additional Restoration and Enhancement Terms and Conditions](#)
- [Example General Grants - Attach 2 - SOW](#)
- [Example General Grants - Attach 3 - Schedule](#)
- [Example General Grants - Attach 4 - Budget](#)
- [Example General Grants - Attach 5 - Performance Measures](#)

# Best Practices – Statement of Work

- ☑ Organize the scope of work into discrete and logically sequenced tasks
- ☑ Provide appropriate timing for tasks
- ☑ Identify the deliverables required to communicate progress and completion of tasks to FRA
- ☑ Check the budget to ensure numbers are consistent with cost information submitted in forms and other areas of the application

**ATTACHMENT 2**  
**STATEMENT OF WORK**

[insert applicant/grantee name]  
[insert project name]  
[insert grant program name and fiscal year]

**I. AUTHORITY**

<b>Authorization</b>	E.g. 49 U.S.C. § 24407 For CRISI Program Insert eligibility citation (e.g. 49 U.S.C. 24407(c)(1)).
<b>Funding Authority/Appropriation</b>	E.g. Contract authority in the FAST Act Sec. 1101(a)(5), Pub. L. 114-94 (December 4, 2015) E.g. Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018, Division L, Title I (Pub. L. 115-141 (March 23, 2018))
<b>Notice of Funding Opportunity</b>	[NOFO Title] for Fiscal Year 20XX, [Federal Register citation], [Month, date, year] [volume #] FR [publication date]

**II. BACKGROUND**

*Instructions: This section also provides high-level overview information regarding the project and applicant/grantee, and defines the term "Project" as that term is used throughout the Agreement. Approximately 3-4 paragraph in length.*

**ATTACHMENT 3**  
**DELIVERABLES AND APPROVED PROJECT SCHEDULE**

[insert applicant/grantee name]  
[insert project name]

**I. DELIVERABLES AND APPROVED PROJECT SCHEDULE**

*Instructions: The "Project Schedule and Deliverables" section outlines the Project Performance Period for the Agreement and provides a concise table listing all of the deliverables required for the applicable tasks covered under the Agreement and their submission due date to FRA. The Grantee must list every deliverable required for each applicable task, as well as any other deliverables FRA may require. Use the guidance below to develop this section.*

The deliverables associated with this Agreement are listed below. The Grantee must complete these deliverables to FRA's satisfaction to be authorized for funding reimbursement and for the Project to be considered complete.

Unless otherwise approved, requests for extensions of the Project Performance Period must be submitted not later than 90 days before the end of the Project Performance Period, consistent with Section 4(b) of Attachment 1.

**Deliverables**

Task #	Deliverable Name	Due Date
--------	------------------	----------

**ATTACHMENT 4**  
**APPROVED PROJECT BUDGET**

[insert applicant/grantee name]  
[insert project name]

**I. APPROVED PROJECT BUDGET**

*Instructions: The "Approved Project Budget" section outlines the initial cost estimate for the project by task and by funding source. Both methods are required and necessary to assess project costs. The "funding source" budget should list all funding sources contributing to the project (e.g. the FRA grant subject to this SOW, other FRA or Federal grants, the grantee's contribution, and contributions from all other project partners). Use the text and table below to develop this section.*

The total estimated cost of the Project is \$[amount], for which the FRA grant will contribute up to [percent amount] % of the total Project cost, not to exceed \$[amount]. The Grantee's Non-Federal Contribution is comprised of [cash contributions only/cash in the amount of \$XX and [insert description of in-kind contribution] valued at \$XX]. Any additional expense required beyond that provided in this Agreement to complete the Project will be borne by the Grantee.

**Project Budget by Task**

Task #	Task Name	Federal (FRA) Contribution	Non-Federal Contribution	Total Cost
1		\$	\$	\$

**ATTACHMENT 5**  
**PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS**

[insert applicant/grantee name]  
[insert project name]

**I. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS**

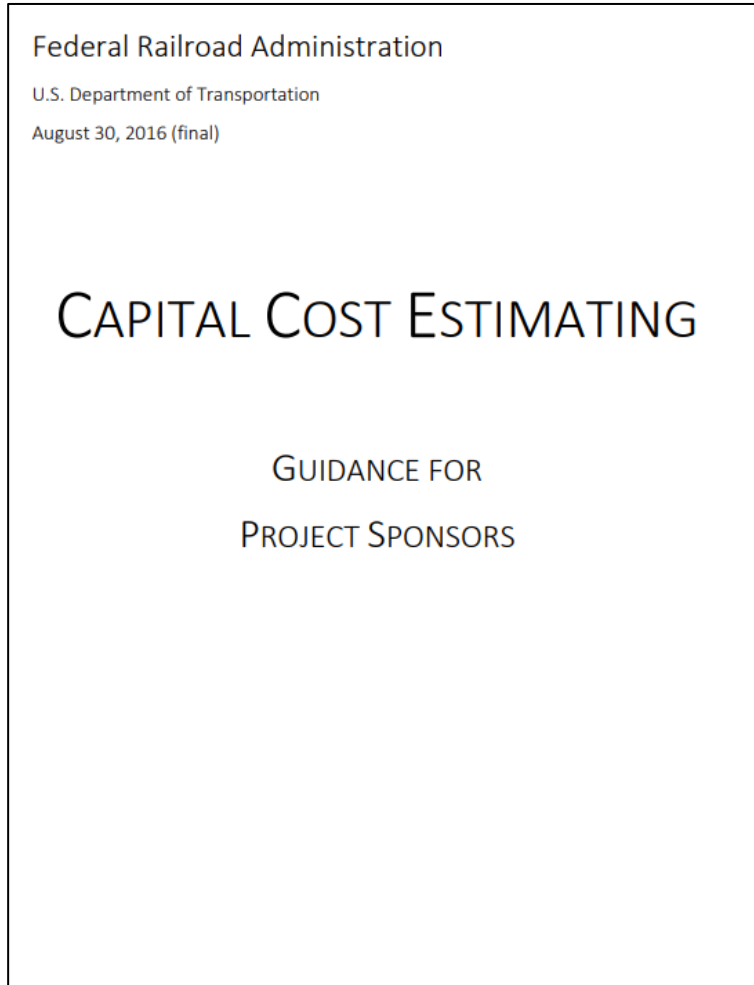
The table below contains the performance measures that this Project is expected to achieve. These performance measures will enable FRA to assess Grantee's progress in achieving strategic goals and objectives. The Grantee will report on these performance measures per the frequency and duration specified in the table.

Upon Project completion, Grantee will submit reports comparing the Actual Project Performance of the new and or improved asset(s) against the Pre-Project (Baseline) Performance and Expected Post-Project Performance as described in Table 1 below. Grantee need not include any analysis in addition to the described data; however, Grantee is welcome to provide information explaining the reported data. Grantee will submit the performance measures report to the Regional Manager in accordance with Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Performance Measurement Table**

Performance Measure	Description of Measure	Measurement	Reporting
		Pre-Project (Baseline) Performance as of [insert Date]: [insert the performance of	Actual Project Performance After Project Completion: Comparison of actual

# Best Practices – Statement of Work



- Capital Cost Estimating Guidance:
  - <https://railroads.dot.gov/rail-network-development/training-guidance/capital-cost-estimating-guidance>
- Utilize FRA’s Standard Cost Categories as a way to organize the scope of work and budget
  - <https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/mp-33-scc-worksheets>
- Ensure consistency among the project narrative, statement of work, benefit-cost analysis, and other application materials

FRA MAIN WORKSHEET										Issue Date 5/4/16
Grantee Name							Today's Date			8/28/14
Project Name and Location: Rail Project A, Two cities with rural in-between							Yr of Base Year \$			2014
Current Phase : Final Design, Ready to Procure Construction							Yr of Revenue Ops			2017
Standard Cost Category	Unit	Quantity	Base Year Dollars					YOE Dollars Total (X000) (from Inflation Worksheet)		
			Without Contingency (X000)	Allocated Contingency (X000)	TOTAL (X000)	Unit Cost (X000)	Percent of Construction Cost		Percent of Total Project Cost	
<b>10</b> <b>Guideway &amp; Track Elements</b>	<b>Lineal Miles of Guideway</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>1,520,000</b>	<b>140,000</b>	<b>1,660,000</b>	<b>15,810</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>1,718,100</b>	
10.010	Guideway: At-grade exclusive right-of-way	100	550,000	50,000	600,000	6,000				
10.020	Guideway: At-grade semi-exclusive (allows cross-traffic)		0		0					
10.030	Guideway: At-grade in mixed traffic		0		0					
10.040	Guideway: Aerial structure		0		0					

# Best Practices— Benefit-Cost Analysis



# BCA – Purpose

## Why Do a Benefit-Cost Analysis?

- BCA encourages applicants to focus and refine project scopes and outcomes
- BCA is a method to enable comparison across diverse project types and magnitudes
- Part of Fed-State Partnership selection criteria:
  - Secretary shall “take into account the cost-benefit analysis of the proposed project”
  - Other FRA programs (CRISI) and Departmental programs (RAISE and FASTLANE/INFRA) have similar provisions

## BCA – Overview of Steps

- 1 Specify your project's base case, alternate case, and timeline
- 2 SHOW how your alternate case will result in specific effects (i.e., project benefits)
- 3 Break down benefits and costs into the smallest sub-elements possible
- 4 Assign monetary values to sub-elements using USDOT's [BCA Guidance](#)
- 5 Calculate results and discount to base year

## BCA – Scope of Analysis

- The base case reflects the status quo—i.e., the world as it exists today
- The alternate case (i.e., “build scenario”) is the proposed project
  - An analysis for construction should present a *single* project
  - One *application* can contain multiple projects
  - Multiple projects need multiple analyses
  - Avoided costs of alternatives not taken are NOT benefits
- The timeline must be appropriate for the proposed project
  - Match the useful life of the project, but not more than 30 years of operation
  - Projects with useful life beyond 30 years will have residual value (stations in particular) → Use GAAP straight line depreciation

## BCA – Scope of Analysis

- Examine *ONLY* the differences between the base case and alternate case (i.e., the marginal effects)
- Planned future projects are *irrelevant*
- These differences should reflect realistic projections

### Examples

- Intercity passengers will likely change modes if their station is unavailable, while commuters are more likely to divert to another nearby station
- Host railroads will impose speed and weight restrictions before shutting down completely
- Growth rates will not suddenly double unless a fundamental change occurs



## BCA – Benefits & Costs

- The marginal effects of the alternate case are the project benefits
  - Marginal effects are sometimes undesirable, shown as negative dollar amounts
- The total costs of the project are all costs associated with implementing the project
- Total **NET** operations & maintenance costs should be included *as benefits*:
  - Net O&M for new infrastructure and equipment will be a negative dollar amount
  - Changes in net O&M costs for existing infrastructure can be positive or negative, but are always included in the numerator
  - Residual value for remaining useful life is a benefit, NOT subtracted from costs

# BCA – Development

- Break down marginal effects into the smallest possible sub-elements
  - This is where 90% of your “thought work” occurs
  - Provide documentation for inputs and growth rates

## Example

Replacing a bridge might result in...

- Removal of slow orders, improving through speed (travel time savings)
- Reduced wait time at the approaches (travel time savings and emissions)
- Decreased delays at nearby sidings along the corridor (travel time savings and emissions)
- Reduced O&M costs



# BCA – Modal Diversion

- Modal diversion is a marginal choice; *ONLY* count marginal effects
- New users value the project less than existing users (Follow the 50% rule in USDOT'S [BCA Guidance](#))
- Lost revenue from passengers changing to other modes is a transfer, NOT a benefit (Follow USDOT'S [BCA Guidance](#))

## Example

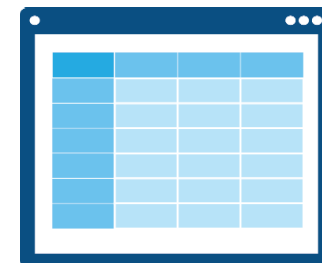
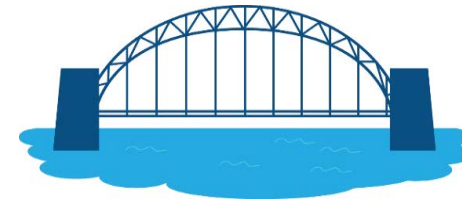
Avoided rail-to-truck diversion could result in...

- Increased pavement damage
- Increased harmful emissions
- Increased congestion on highways
- Decreased safety



# BCA – Final Advice

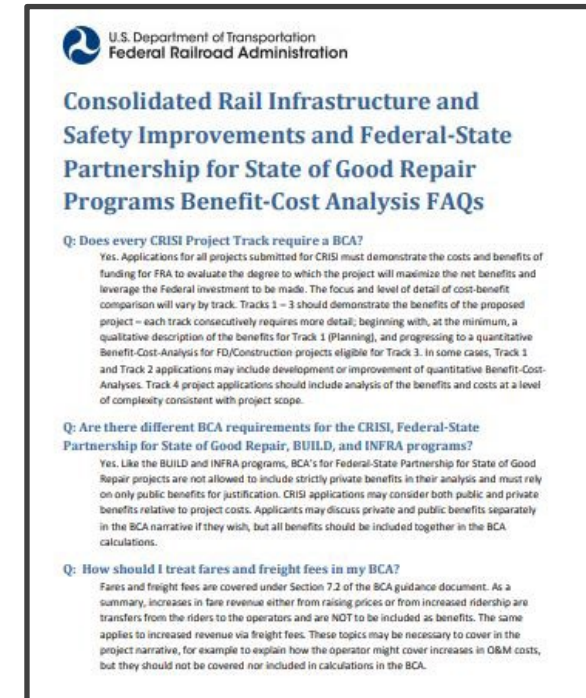
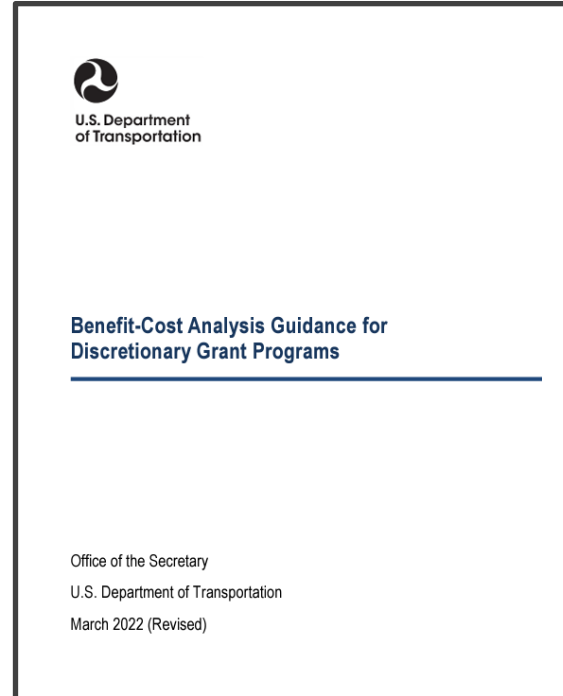
- ✓ **Document your assumptions in as much detail as possible.**
- ✓ If your application contains multiple projects, analyze benefits and costs of each project *separately*.
- ✓ If your BCA includes modal diversion, include YOUR freight and/or passenger traffic counts.
- ✓ Include the specific AADT for each grade crossing project. State DOTs often fail to send updates.
- ✓ ***You must include an unlocked Excel spreadsheet that clearly shows your calculations and discounting.***





# BCA – Guidance/Online Resources

- Follow USDOT's *BCA Guidance*, available at:  
<https://www.transportation.gov/office-policy/transportation-policy/benefit-cost-analysis-guidance>
- For rail-specific examples on how to apply the *BCA Guidance*, refer to FRA's BCA FAQ available at:  
<https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/consolidated-rail-infrastructure-and-safety-improvements-crisi-and-federal-state>



# Best Practices— Environmental Readiness

# Environmental Readiness

*Environmental review is required for all FRA grant-funded projects*

Requirements include:

- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106
- Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act
- Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7
- Environmental Justice
- Wetlands and navigable waterways
- Others, as applicable

# Environmental Readiness – Fundamentals

## What to Know Before You Begin...

- The amount/kinds of environmental information and documentation you're typically expected to provide as part of your application depends on **which track of the FSP-National program** (1, 2, or 3) you're applying under
- Environmental review must be completed and approved by FRA **prior to construction**
- FRA may be able to **adopt environmental documents** prepared by/for other Federal agencies

# Environmental Readiness – Track 1 or 2

Track 1 or 2

Apply if...

- You're seeking grant funding to pay for **development of a NEPA document** and conducting associated environmental impact analyses.
  - Post-selection, FRA coordinates with grantees to formally determine the NEPA Class of Action and NEPA document required
    - 3 Options:
      1. Categorical Exclusion (CE) Worksheet
      2. Environmental Assessment (EA)
      3. Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

And then...

**With your application, provide as much project information/existing documentation as possible, i.e.:**

- Project description
- Location (include maps, photos)
- Any planning or environmental analyses done to date
- Any prior or anticipated public/stakeholder/agency outreach or coordination
- Anticipated environmental impacts
- Anticipated local/State/Federal permits or other approvals (e.g., USACE)
- Anticipated coordination/ consultation with resource and/or regulatory agencies (e.g., SHPO, USFWS)

# Environmental Readiness – Track 1 or 2

Track 1 or 2

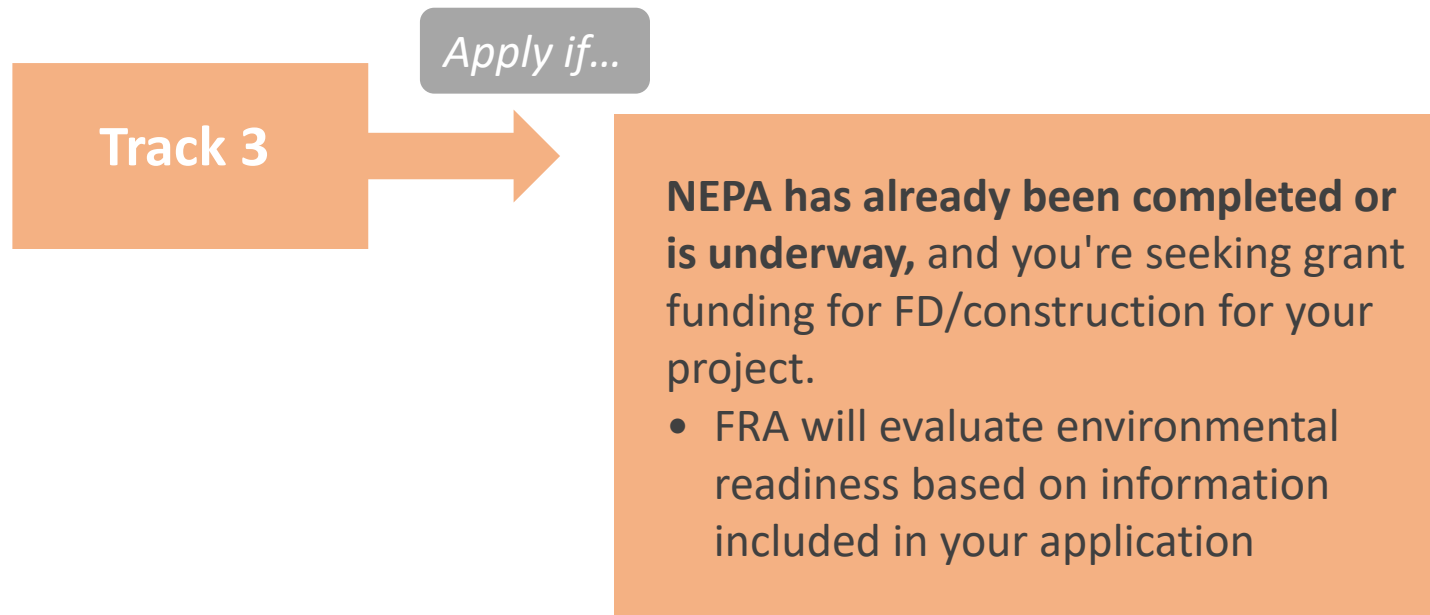


## Also consider providing:

- A draft [Categorical Exclusion \(CE\) worksheet](#) with your grant application, *OR*
- Identify the anticipated CE category(-ies) that the project may fall under (*see FRA's CEs: [23 CFR 771.116](#)*)
- If your project does not fit clearly within a CE category, an EA or EIS may be necessary depending on the potential for significant environmental impacts.

*Need general **technical assistance** regarding our environmental review and documentation requirements?  
Contact our experts at [FRAenvironment@dot.gov](mailto:FRAenvironment@dot.gov)*

# Environmental Readiness – Track 3



*And then...*

**With your application:**

- Include a copy of approved NEPA document and/or weblink (or anticipated completion date). Identify:
  - Type of NEPA document (CE, EA, EIS)
  - Lead Federal agency
  - Date of Federal NEPA approval
- Identify if any permits or approvals may be required from agencies besides FRA
- Identify any substantive changes to the proposed project scope and/or to the environmental setting/conditions since date of prior NEPA approval
  - FRA may determine a NEPA re-evaluation or supplemental environmental analyses are necessary

# Environmental Readiness – NEPA Resources

- FRA Environmental Webpage

<https://railroads.dot.gov/rail-network-development/environment/environment>

- FRA NEPA Procedures

<https://railroads.dot.gov/rail-network-development/environment/fra-legislation-regulations>

- FRA Categorical Exclusion (CE) Worksheet

<https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/categorical-exclusion-worksheet-0>

- FRA CE Companion Guide

<https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/fra-categorical-exclusion-companion-guide>



## Environmental Readiness – NEPA Resources

- Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Website

<https://ceq.doe.gov>

- A Citizen's Guide to the NEPA

[https://ceq.doe.gov/docs/get-involved/Citizens\\_Guide\\_Dec07.pdf](https://ceq.doe.gov/docs/get-involved/Citizens_Guide_Dec07.pdf)

- AASHTO Center for Environmental Excellence Practitioner's Handbook

<https://environment.transportation.org/resources/practitioners-handbooks/>

# Environmental Readiness – NHPA Section 106 Resources

- Section 106 Regulations (36 CFR Part 800)

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2021-title36-vol3/pdf/CFR-2021-title36-vol3-part800.pdf>

- Section 106 Review Process

<https://www.achp.gov/sites/default/files/2018-05/Section%20106%20Review%20Process.Handout.2017.jpg>

- A Citizen's Guide to Section 106 Review

<https://www.achp.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2019-04/CitizenGuide2015v4-spreads%20layout.pdf>

- Section 106 and Infrastructure Projects

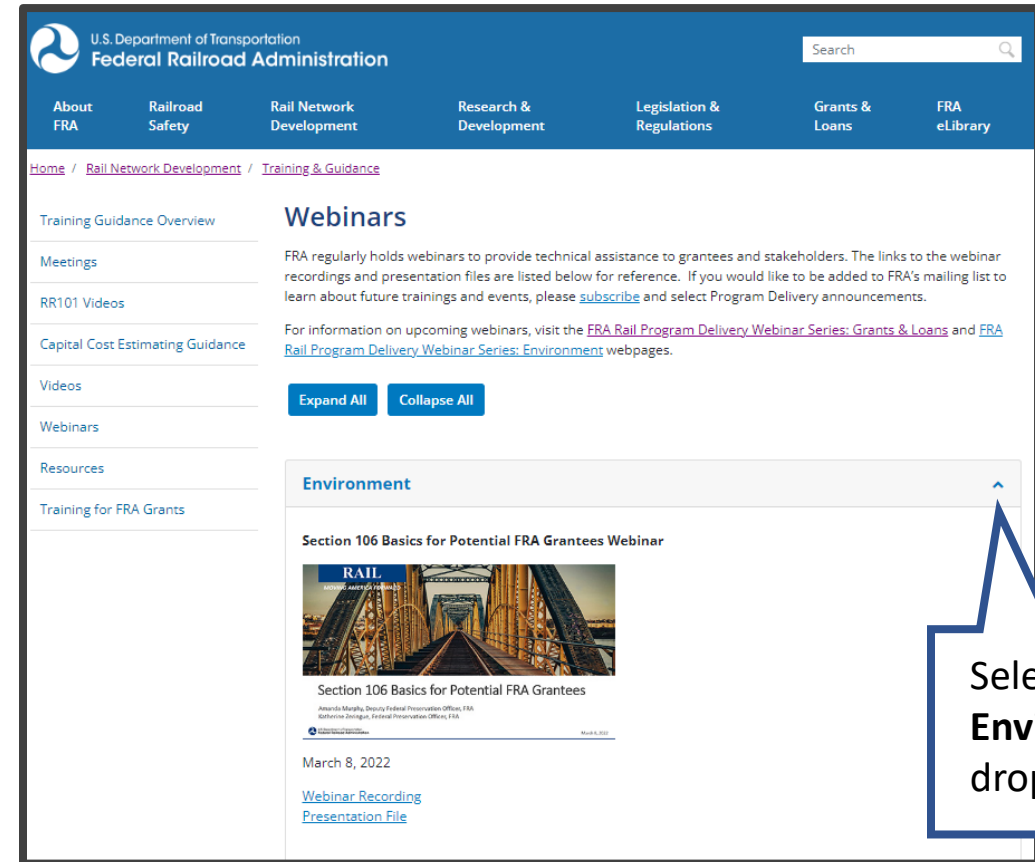
<https://www.achp.gov/section-106-and-Infrastructure-Projects>

- Section 106 Program Comment for Rail ROW

<https://railroads.dot.gov/rail-network-development/environment/final-section-106-program-comment-rail-rights-way>

# FRA NEPA/Section 106 Webinars

- There are several recorded webinars on FRA's website regarding our NEPA/Section 106 review requirements and processes
- [Training & Guidance | Webinars | dot.gov](#)



The screenshot shows the Federal Railroad Administration's website. The top navigation bar includes links for About FRA, Railroad Safety, Rail Network Development, Research & Development, Legislation & Regulations, Grants & Loans, and FRA eLibrary. The main content area is titled "Webinars" and features a sidebar with links to Training Guidance Overview, Meetings, RR101 Videos, Capital Cost Estimating Guidance, Videos, Webinars, Resources, and Training for FRA Grants. The main text explains that FRA regularly holds webinars and provides links to webinar recordings and presentation files. Below this, there are "Expand All" and "Collapse All" buttons. A drop-down menu is open, showing "Environment" selected. Underneath, a webinar titled "Section 106 Basics for Potential FRA Grantees Webinar" is listed, featuring a video thumbnail, the date "March 8, 2022", and links for "Webinar Recording" and "Presentation File". A callout box with a blue border and a pointer highlights the "Environment" drop-down menu with the text "Select the Environment drop-down".

# Recap & Reminders

## Recap & Reminders

- Always **read the NOFO** carefully
- Determine what a successful project looks like
- Ensure you **submit all required documents**
- Address all the evaluation and selection criteria on which you will be rated
  - **Be clear and direct** in responding to criteria
  - Make your application easy to read and evaluate
  - Don't bury key points!

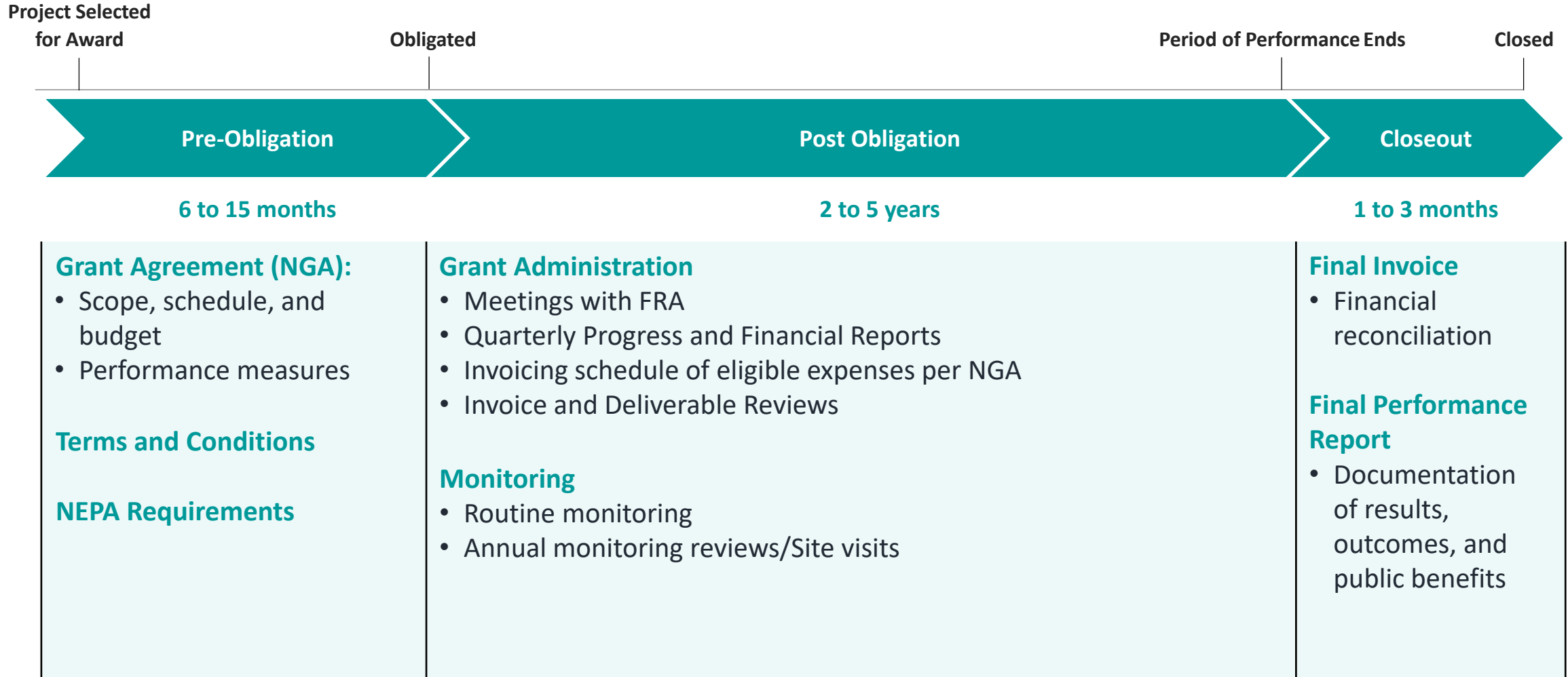


*Submit your application **on time!** Late applications **will not be reviewed.***

## Recap & Reminders

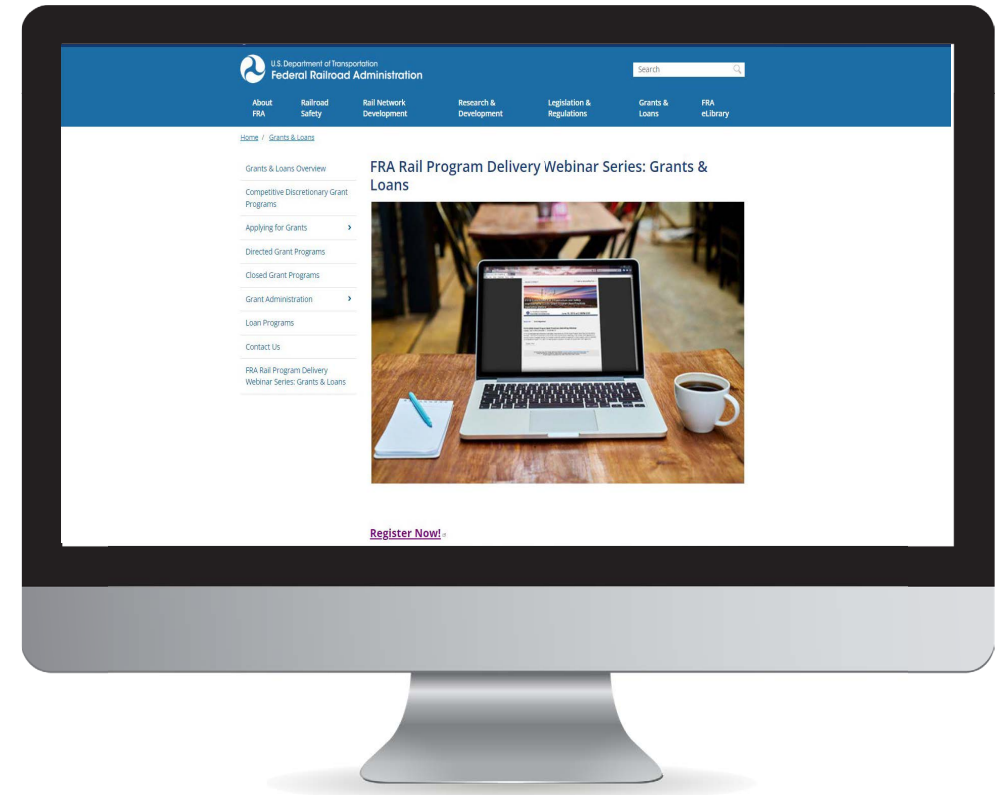
- **Verify funding and budget amounts** for consistency!
  - **Ensure amounts match** in different parts of your application package (e.g., cover sheet, SOW, Project Narrative, SF-424)
  - Numbers in columns and rows should add up properly in budget tables
  - Only include project costs that are expected to be incurred after grant selection
- Name key partners, indicate in-place agreements, and **include letters of support**
- Have an objective “cold reader” — i.e., an individual unfamiliar with the grant application — review your final document before submission

# Grant Lifecycle and Approximate Time Frames



# Upcoming Fed-State Webinars

- FRA will host three FSP Information Sessions in January and February 2023:
  - **Session #1:** Eligibility, Host Infrastructure Agreements and Relationship with Corridor ID
  - **Session #2:** Major Capital Projects
  - **Session #3:** Project Narrative and Statements of Work
- Date and registration information will be available soon—look for information on [FRA's Grants & Loans webinar landing page](#)



*FRA anticipates a January 2023 Northeast Corridor-focused FSP webinar; information will be provided following publication of the FSP-NEC NOFO.*





# QUESTIONS?

# Contact Us

Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590



Connect with us [USDOTFRA](#)



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**Application Process: Doug Gascon**  
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**Benefit-Cost Analysis: Michael Johnson**  
Michael.Johnson1@dot.gov

**Environmental Readiness: Laura Shick**  
Laura.Shick@dot.gov  
FRAenvironment@dot.gov

**FRA Competitive Discretionary Grant Programs**  
**Webpage** <https://www.fra.dot.gov/grants>