



How to Apply for FY18 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Grants

August 8, 2018

Objective

- ▶ Provide guidance to applicants on how to compete for CRISI grants
 - ▶ Grant Program Information
 - ▶ Notices of Funding Opportunity
 - ▶ How to Apply and Application Content
 - ▶ Tips for Preparing Benefit-Cost Analysis
 - ▶ Key Takeaways

Grant Program Information

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvements

Purpose of Program

To fund projects that improve the safety, efficiency, and/or reliability of intercity passenger and freight rail systems

Federal Funding

- ▶ \$318,430,337
 - ▶ \$35.5M for initiation/restoration capital projects
 - ▶ At least 25% for rural area projects

Federal Share

- ▶ Maximum: 80%
- ▶ Statutory Preference: 50% or less

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvements

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Application Due Date

- ▶ September 17, 2018 at 5 PM EDT

Eligible Applicants

- ▶ State Entities
- ▶ Public Agencies or Publicly Chartered Authorities
- ▶ Local Governments
- ▶ Amtrak or other Intercity Passenger Rail Carrier
- ▶ Class II or III railroads
- ▶ Any Rail Carrier or equipment manufacturer in partnership with at least one state entity, public agency, and/or local government
- ▶ The Transportation Research Board
- ▶ A University transportation center engaged in rail-related research
- ▶ A non-profit labor organization

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvements

Eligible Projects

- ▶ Wide Range of Rail Capital Projects
 - ▶ Congestion mitigation
 - ▶ Ridership growth facilitation
 - ▶ Enhancements to multimodal connections
 - ▶ Improvements to short-line or regional railroad infrastructure
- ▶ Railroad Safety Technology – *Non PTC*
- ▶ Track, Station and Equipment Improvements for Intercity Passenger Rail
- ▶ Grade Crossing Improvements
- ▶ Rail Line Relocation and Improvement
- ▶ Regional, State, Corridor Planning and Environmental Analyses
- ▶ Safety Programs and Institutes
- ▶ Research, Workforce Development, and Training – *NEW for FY18*

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Application Requirements

- ▶ Identify private sector, state, and/or local funding
- ▶ Provide benefit-cost analysis
- ▶ FY18 applications can apply for more than one track per project – ***NEW for FY18***
- ▶ Applications should still identify which tracks applications falls under:
 - ▶ (1) Planning (regional, state, corridor planning; not project-specific)
 - ▶ (2) PE/NEPA
 - ▶ (3) Final Design/Construction
 - ▶ (4) Research, Safety Programs, & Institutes

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvements

Evaluation Criteria

- ▶ **Technical Merit:**
 - ▶ Project readiness
 - ▶ Private sector participation
 - ▶ Consistent with DOT Planning guidance and documents

- ▶ **Project Benefits:**
 - ▶ Effects on system performance, safety, competitiveness, reliability, trip or transit time, and resilience
 - ▶ Integration with other modes
 - ▶ Ability to meet existing or anticipated demand

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvements

Selection Criteria

- ▶ Preference for higher matching funds from multiple sources, maximized net benefits, and private sector participation
- ▶ Key departmental objectives
 - ▶ Supporting Economic Vitality
 - ▶ Leveraging Federal Funding
 - ▶ Preparing for Future Operations/Maintenance Costs – *More Explicitly Defined for FY18*
 - ▶ Innovative Approaches
 - ▶ Accountability

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Funding Restrictions

- ▶ Pre-award costs incurred prior to selection, without an FRA NEPA determination, and without prior-FRA written approval are unallowable costs.
- ▶ FRA is prohibited under 49 U.S.C. 24405(f) from providing CRISI grants for commuter rail passenger transportation.

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvements

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Key Differences from FY17 CRISI & FY18 CRISI PTC

- ▶ PTC only eligible for Intercity Passenger Rail and Class II/III Railroad projects; Commuter Rail and Class I Railroad PTC projects not eligible
- ▶ Research, workforce development, and training projects are eligible
- ▶ Applications can include multiple phases of a project in a single application (Planning, PE/NEPA, FD/Construction)
- ▶ Greater emphasis on lifecycle asset management principles
- ▶ **Applicants may resubmit FY17 CRISI and FY18 CRISI PTC applications for consideration – indicate whether application has changed since previous submission**

Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs)

What is a NOFO?

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

Where do I start?

- ▶ Check the FRA Website Page on Discretionary Competitive Grant Programs at:

<https://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P0997>



The screenshot shows the Federal Railroad Administration website. 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 main navigation menu includes: About FRA, Railroad Safety, Rail Network Development, Research & Development, Legislation & Regulations, Grants & Loans, Communications & Governmental Affairs, and FRA eLibrary. The page content is titled "Competitive Discretionary Grant Programs" and includes a sub-section "Accepting Applications". A highlighted link reads "2018 Notice of Funding Opportunity".

- ▶ Click on the link to access the NOFO.

Where is the CRISI NOFO?

FEDERAL REGISTER
The Daily Journal of the United States Government

Notice

Notice of Funding Opportunity for Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements
A Notice by the [Federal Railroad Administration](#) on 07/19/2018

PUBLISHED DOCUMENT

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

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

SUMMARY:
This notice details the application requirements and procedures to obtain grant^[1] funding for eligible projects under the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program. CRISI Program funding under this notice is provided by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018, (2018 Appropriation). Funding for positive train control (PTC) systems deployment included in the 2018 Appropriation is provided under a different NOFO published on May 18, 2018 (CRISI PTC NOFO). Applicants may apply for funding for PTC system elements under this NOFO as well if such elements are otherwise eligible under the CRISI Program. The opportunities described in this notice are made available under Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number 20.325, Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements.

DOCUMENT DETAILS

Printed version:
[PDF](#)

Publication Date:
07/19/2018

Agencies:
[Federal Railroad Administration](#)

Dates:
Applications for funding under this solicitation are due no later than 5:00 p.m. EDT, September 17, 2018. Applications received after 5:00 p.m. EDT on September 17, 2018 will not be considered for funding.
Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding. See Section D of this notice for additional information on the

Document Type:

What information is in 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

Where I find “how to apply” information?

- ▶ Search grants on Grants.gov

GRANTS.GOV™
FIND. APPLY. SUCCEED.™

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

[Search Tips](#) | [Export Detailed Data](#)

BASIC SEARCH CRITERIA:

Keyword(s):

Opportunity Number:

CFDA:

OPPORTUNITY STATUS:

Forecasted (0)

Posted (1)

Closed (1)

Archived (2)

SORT BY: [Posted Date (Descending)]

DATE RANGE: [All Available]

1 - 1 OF 1 MATCHING RESULTS:

Opportunity Number	Opportunity Title	Agency	Opportunity Status	Posted Date	Close Date
FR-CRS-18-004	FY18 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program	DOT-FRA	Posted	07/19/2018	09/17/2018

- ▶ Click on the Opportunity Number to see the Synopsis

What is the Synopsis?

- ▶ Summary information about the grant opportunity in Grants.gov

VIEW GRANT OPPORTUNITY

FR-CRS-18-004
FY18 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program
Department of Transportation
DOT/Federal Railroad Administration

« Back | Link

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SYNOPSIS | VERSION HISTORY | RELATED DOCUMENTS | PACKAGE

Print Synopsis Details ?

General Information

Document Type: Grants Notice	Version: Synopsis 1
Funding Opportunity Number: FR-CRS-18-004	Posted Date: Jul 19, 2018
Funding Opportunity Title: FY18 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program	Last Updated Date: Jul 19, 2018
Opportunity Category: Discretionary	Original Closing Date for Applications: Sep 17, 2018 No Explanation
Opportunity Category Explanation:	Current Closing Date for Applications: Sep 17, 2018 No Explanation
Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative Agreement	Archive Date: Oct 17, 2018
Category of Funding Activity: Transportation	Estimated Total Program Funding: \$318,430,337
Category Explanation:	Award Ceiling: \$318,430,337
	Award Floor: \$0

2:27 PM 7/31/2018

Application Content

How do I apply?

- ▶ Obtain a Dun and Bradstreet number (DUNS)
- ▶ **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

What do I include in my application?

- ▶ Required Documents
 - ▶ Project Narrative
 - ▶ Statement of Work
 - ▶ Project Development Supporting Documentation
 - ▶ Benefit- Cost Analysis
 - ▶ Other required documents, such as NEPA documentation and Planning documents

What forms are required?

- ▶ 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
- ▶ SF LLL: Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

Where is the FRA's Additional Assurances and Certifications?

- ▶ See the Related Documents in Grants.gov

VIEW GRANT OPPORTUNITY

FR-CRS-18-004
 FY18 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program
 Department of Transportation
 DOT/Federal Railroad Administration

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SYNOPSIS VERSION HISTORY **RELATED DOCUMENTS** PACKAGE

Print Related Documents List ?

Click on the following file link(s) to download the related document(s):

File Description	File Name	Last Updated Date/Time	File Size
Folder: Other Supporting Documents - FRA Assurances&Certifications	FR-CRS-18-004-Other Supporting Documents - FRA Assurances&Certifications.zip	Jul 19, 2018 09:11:48 AM EDT	657.7 KB
Required FRA Assurances and Certifications	FRA F 30 Certifications Regarding Debarment Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters.pdf	Jul 19, 2018 09:11:48 AM EDT	666.6 KB

Windows taskbar: 2:30 PM 7/31/2018

What do I include in the Project Narrative?

- ▶ Cover page
- ▶ Brief summary of the project
 - ▶ Project components, where it is located, and projected outcome
- ▶ Project funding information
- ▶ Applicant eligibility
- ▶ Project eligibility
- ▶ Detailed project description
- ▶ Project location/map
- ▶ Project implementation and management
- ▶ Evaluation and selection criteria
- ▶ Project readiness

What table should I include on the Cover Page?

Project Title	
Applicant	
Project Track	1,2,3 and/or 4
Will this project contribute to the Restoration or Initiation of Intercity Passenger Rail Service?	Yes/no
Was a Federal grant application previously submitted for this project?	Yes/no
If yes, state the name of the Federal grant program and title of the project in the previous application.	Federal Grant Program:
	Project Title:
If applicable, what stage of NEPA is the project in (e.g., EA, Tier 1 NEPA, Tier 2 NEPA, or CE)?	NEPA stage:
Is this a Rural Project? What percentage of the project cost is based in a Rural Area?	Yes/no Percentage of total project cost:
City(ies), State(s) where the project is located	
Urbanized Area where the project is located	
Population of Urbanized Area	
Is the project currently programmed in the: State rail plan, State Freight Plan, TIP, STIP, MPO Long Range Transportation Plan, State Long Range Transportation Plan?	Yes/no (If yes, please specify in which plans the project is currently programmed)

How do I organize the Project Narrative?

- ▶ Be sure that the Project Narrative headings and corresponding information are exactly as specified in the NOFO
- ▶ The Project Narrative should clearly provide details about the FRA Federal funding requested project
- ▶ The Project Narrative must sufficiently address the evaluation and selection criteria to be a competitive application

What is a Statement of Work (SOW)?

- ▶ Addresses the scope, schedule, and budget for the proposed project *as if it was selected for award*
- ▶ A Sample SOW Template is located at:
<https://www.fra.dot.gov/eLib/Details/L18661>.

What do I include in the SOW?

- ▶ Organize the scope of work for the project into discrete tasks
 - ▶ Be clear regarding the work to be done in each task
- ▶ Align tasks with proposed deliverable, schedule and budget line items
- ▶ Use the FRA Standard Cost Categories as a way to organize a SOW and Budget
 - ▶ <https://www.fra.dot.gov/Elib/Document/16647>

CRISI BCA Outline

1. Specify your base case,
Specify your alternate case,
Specify your timeline;
2. Show how alt case will result in
specific effects (project benefits);
3. Break down effect magnitudes as
small as possible;
4. Assign values to the effects using
DOT guidance;
5. Sum the costs and benefits
separately;
6. Discount;
7. Calculate Results.

BCA: Scope of Analysis

- ▶ The base case should reflect the status quo, the world as it exists today. See Pg. 7
- ▶ The alternate case is the proposed project;
 - ▶ Avoided costs of alternatives not taken are NOT benefits. See Pg. 25
- ▶ The Timeline should be appropriate for the proposed project: See Pg. 9
 - ▶ Should match the useful life of the project, but not longer than 30 yrs.
 - ▶ Projects with UL longer than 30 yrs will have residual value; calculate with straight line depreciation.

BCA: Scope of Analysis

- ▶ **ONLY** the differences between the base case and alt case should be examined.
- ▶ These changes should reflect reality:
 - ▶ Shippers will not truck product 2000 miles when another freight station is only 30 miles away.
 - ▶ Railroads will impose speed/weight restrictions before shutting down totally.
 - ▶ Passengers will divert to nearby stations (if available) rather than driving the full distance.

BCA: Benefits & Costs

- ▶ The marginal effects of the alt case are the project benefits. See Pg. 7
 - ▶ Can include undesirable consequences, which should be shown as negative \$'s.
- ▶ The total cost of constructing the project *as well as operating and maintaining it for the full timeline* are the project costs:
 - ▶ Reductions to O&M costs should be regarded as project benefits. See Pg. 23
 - ▶ Residual value for remaining useful life is also a benefit (and not subtracted from costs).

BCA: Development

- ▶ Macro scale effects should be broken down into the smallest possible elements.
- ▶ Replacing a bridge might result in:
 - ▶ Removal of slow orders, improving travel speed (Travel time savings)
 - ▶ Reduce diversion and congestion on nearby track (Travel time savings)
 - ▶ Reduced wait time at the approaches (Travel time savings and emissions)
 - ▶ Decreased delays at nearby sidings and yards (Travel time savings and emissions)

BCA: Modal Diversion

- ▶ Modal diversion is a marginal choice; only count marginal benefits.
- ▶ New/induced users value the service less than existing users. See Pg. 16
- ▶ Rail diversion to truck could involve:
 - ▶ Increased pavement & bridge damage
 - ▶ Increased harmful emissions
 - ▶ Increased congestion on highways
 - ▶ Decreased safety
 - ▶ Lost revenues and increased shipper costs are transfers, not benefits.
 - ▶ For passenger rail, avoided VOC and fares are transfers, not benefits. See Pg. 24

BCA: Monetizing Benefits

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- ▶ Recommended Values are in Appendix A (Pg. 28):
 - ▶ For an injury of unknown severity, use the value of KABCO "U".
 - ▶ Commuting to and from work is considered "personal local" travel, even if it is between municipalities.
 - ▶ "High Speed" Rail means over 125 mph; currently only exists on Amtrak's NEC.
 - ▶ VOC savings will generally not apply to rail projects.

BCA: Calculations

Calendar Year	Project Year	Value of Travel Time Savings	Emissions Savings	Total Benefits	Discounted Benefits at 7%	Construction Costs	O&M Costs	Total Costs	Discounted Costs at 7%	NPV at 7%
2017	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 38,500	\$ -	\$ 38,500	\$ 38,500	\$ (38,500)
2018	1	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 15,500	\$ -	\$ 15,500	\$ 14,486	\$ (14,486)
2019	2	\$ 23,342	\$ 1,428	\$ 24,770	\$ 21,635	\$ -	\$ 150	\$ 150	\$ 131	\$ 21,504
2020	3	\$ 24,570	\$ 1,562	\$ 26,132	\$ 21,331	\$ -	\$ 150	\$ 150	\$ 122	\$ 21,209
2021	4	\$ 25,061	\$ 1,703	\$ 26,764	\$ 20,418	\$ -	\$ 150	\$ 150	\$ 114	\$ 20,304
2022	5	\$ 26,781	\$ 1,841	\$ 28,622	\$ 20,407	\$ -	\$ 150	\$ 150	\$ 107	\$ 20,300
	Total	\$ 99,754	\$ 6,534	\$ 106,288	\$ 83,792	\$ 54,000	\$ 600	\$ 54,600	\$ 53,461	\$ 30,331

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Add Benefits and Costs Separately

BCA: Calculations

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Total \$ / 1.07^{Project Year}

BCA: Calculations

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Discounted Benefits – Discounted Costs = \$NPV

BCA: Calculations

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$$\frac{\text{Discounted Benefits}}{\text{Discounted Costs}} = \text{BCR}$$

CRISI BCA Guidelines

- ▶ Document your assumptions in as much detail as possible.
- ▶ Explain how the project will lead to the expected outcomes.
- ▶ Work from the bottom up.

CRISI BCA Guidelines

- ▶ If the project has separate elements, report benefits and costs of each sub-project separately.
- ▶ If your BCA includes modal diversion, include YOUR mix of commodities and traffic volumes.

CRISI BCA Guidelines

- ▶ ***Include an unlocked Excel spreadsheet that clearly shows your calculations and discounting.***

CRISI BCA Guidelines

- ▶ Follow USDOT BCA guidance (the most recent version can be found [here](#).)
- ▶ Refer to the [BCA FAQs](#) for some rail specific examples of how to apply the BCA Guidance

CRISI BCA Guidelines

▶ GradeDEC link:

<https://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P0337>

▶ GradeDEC documentation:

<https://www.fra.dot.gov/eLib/Details/L03761>

Environmental Reviews

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- ▶ Are triggered by a Federal Action
- ▶ Interact with the planning process
- ▶ Can help with good decision-making
- ▶ Required by National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Types of Environmental Reviews

- ▶ EIS / ROD: Environmental Impact Statement
- ▶ EA / FONSI: Environmental Assessment
- ▶ CE: Categorical Exclusion
- ▶ Tiered Environmental Documents

Environmental Readiness

- ▶ Document NEPA completion or review underway
 - ▶ Date of actual or anticipated completion and related milestones
 - ▶ Website link to documents
- ▶ See additional FRA NEPA compliance information at:

<https://www.fra.dot.gov/eLib/Details/L05286>

Best Practices

Best Practices

- ▶ Read the NOFO carefully
- ▶ Determine what a "successful" project will look like
- ▶ Register in SAM and Grants.gov early
- ▶ Apply early enough to meet the application deadline
- ▶ When applying through Grants.gov, use the "Track My Application" function
- ▶ Use the checklist with the application requirements in the NOFO as you complete your application

Best Practices

- ▶ Check to see that all budget figures match corresponding figures on the forms, cover sheet, SOW, and in the Project Narrative
 - ▶ Numbers in columns and rows should add up properly in budget tables
- ▶ Address all of the evaluation and selection criteria on which you will be rated
 - ▶ By clearly and directly responding to the criteria, your application will be easier to read and evaluate. Don't bury key points!
- ▶ Name key partners, indicate in-place agreements, and include letters of support

Best Practices

- ▶ Align your strategies, activities, staffing, and other application content
- ▶ For grade crossing improvement projects, include grade crossing numbers
- ▶ Only include project costs expected to be incurred after selection of the grant



Thank you!

CRISI: Frances Bourne and Will Dyer

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BCA: Nate Vomocil and Stephen O'Connor

Nathan.Vomocil@dot.gov

Environmental: Michael Johnsen

Michael.Johnsen@dot.gov

Grant Application Processing: Moshe Adams
and Amy Houser

Amy.Houser@dot.gov