How to Apply for FY 2018 CRISI-PTC Systems Grants

September 21, 2018

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Objective

▶ Provide guidance to applicants on how to apply for FY 2018 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement (CRISI)-Positive Train Control (PTC) Systems Grants

   ▶ Grant Program Information

   ▶ Notices of Funding Opportunity

   ▶ Application Content

   ▶ Best Practices

Grant Program Information

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

CRISI-PTC Systems Grants

Purpose of Program

- To fund the deployment of PTC system technology for intercity passenger rail, freight rail, and/or commuter rail passenger transportation

Federal Funding

- $46,301,702 in remaining grant funding is available

Federal Share

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

CRISI-PTC Systems Grants

Application Due Date

▶ October 12, 2018

Eligible Applicants

▶ State Entities

▶ Public Agencies or Publicly Chartered Authority

▶ Local Governments

▶ Amtrak or other Intercity Passenger Rail Carrier

▶ Class II or III Railroad

▶ 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

CRISI-PTC Systems Grants

Eligible Projects

▶ Projects that deploy PTC systems technology for intercity passenger rail, freight rail, and/or commuter rail passenger transportation:

- ▶ Back office systems
- ▶ Wayside, communications, and onboard hardware equipment
- ▶ Software
- ▶ Equipment installation
- ▶ Spectrum
- ▶ Any component, testing, and training for the implementation of PTC systems

▶ NOTE: *Maintenance and operating expenses incurred after a PTC system is placed in revenue service are <u>ineligible</u>*

CRISI-PTC Systems Grants

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

CRISI-PTC Systems Grants

Selection Criteria

▶ Preference for higher matching funds, maximized net benefits, and private sector participation

▶ Key departmental objectives
  ▶ Supporting Economic Vitality
  ▶ Leveraging Federal Funding
  ▶ Innovative Approaches
  ▶ Accountability

Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs)

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

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
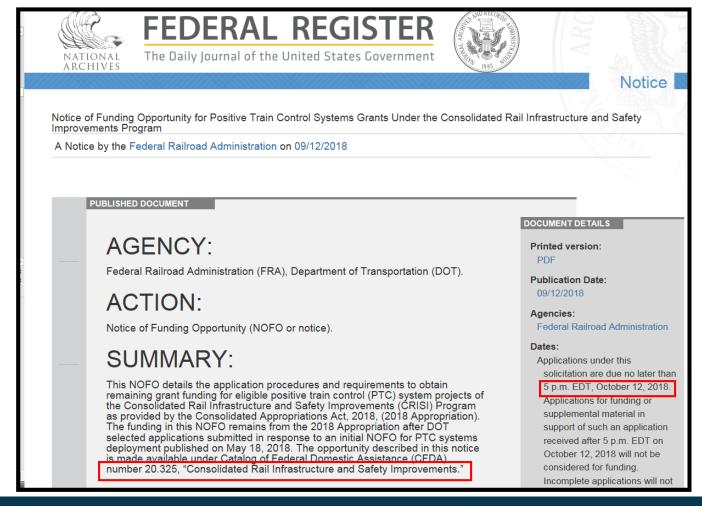
Where do I start?

▶ Check the FRA Website Page on Discretionary Competitive Grant Programs at:
https://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P0997

▶ Click on the link to access the NOFO.
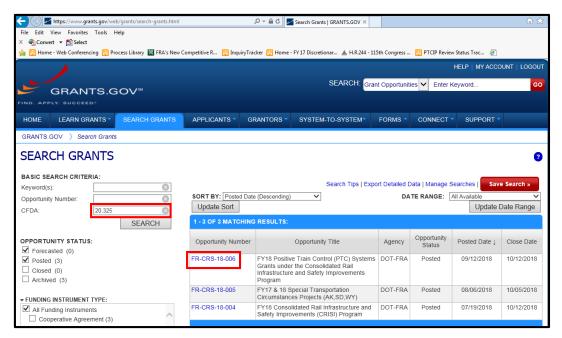
Where is the CRISI - PTC NOFO?

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

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Where I find "how to apply" information?

▶Search grants on Grants.gov

▶Click on the Opportunity Number to see the Synopsis

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

What is the Synopsis?

▶ Summary information about the grant opportunity in Grants.gov

Application Content

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

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

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	
Lead applicant	
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:
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	

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

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

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

Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA)

▶Follow the general DOT BCA guidance (for Discretionary Grant Programs)

▶Refer to FRA's BCA FAQs for some rail specific examples of how to apply the BCA Guidance

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 <u>marginal</u> 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 <u>benefits</u>. See Pg. 23

  ▶ Residual value for remaining useful life is also a benefit (and not subtracted from costs).

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

BCA: Modal Diversion

▶ Modal diversion is a <u>marginal</u> 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

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

BCA: Monetizing Benefits

▶ 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 <u>local</u>" 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.

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

Reimbursement Requests

▶ Expenditures must comply with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200)

▶ FRA will only approve pre-award costs if such costs are incurred pursuant to the grant negotiation and after the announcement of selections (i.e., most previously incurred costs are not eligible)

Best Practices

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

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

- Only include project costs expected to be incurred after selection of the grant

Thank you!

Frances Bourne: Frances.Bourne@dot.gov

Amy Houser: Amy.Houser@dot.gov

BCA: Nate Vomocil and Stephen O'Connor:

Nathan.Vomocil@dot.gov

FRA Competitive Discretionary Grant Programs Webpage:
https://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P0997