

Grant Application Checklist for a Strong Transportation Workforce and Labor Plan

Three Core Components of a Strong Plan

Most U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) discretionary grants include selection criteria associated with creating good jobs and expanding workforce opportunities. Although the criteria may differ among grants, a strong job quality and workforce plan consists generally of three core components, listed below:

1. Creating good-paying jobs with free and fair choice to join a union.
2. Expanding high-quality training and education programs to help train and place people in good-paying jobs, with a focus on women, people of color, and other populations facing systemic barriers to employment such as people with disabilities and people with convictions.
3. Implementing policies both during procurement and during project implementation that will promote the hiring and retention of underrepresented workers.



Source: USDOT/Getty

The checklist below provides additional information on the components of an ideal plan. The checklist is furnished to spark thoughts and ideas that applicants may want to share. Applicants are not required to address everything on the list in order to be competitive for a particular grant's selection criterion. Please review the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the specific program you are considering to ensure you are responsive to that particular application.

This checklist is also meant to encourage greater partnership between transportation and workforce agencies at the state and local levels. Transportation agencies should be aware that the U.S. Department of Labor has also sent an advisory notice to the federal workforce system on how to partner with transportation entities on infrastructure law implementation. [See that advisory notice here.](#)

Workforce and Labor Plan Checklist

What are you including in the application to show that the jobs created are [good-paying jobs](#) with free and fair choice to join a union?

- ✓ Have you detailed how all [Davis-Bacon requirements](#) applicable to the funding recipient and contractors and subcontractors will be met or exceeded?
- ✓ How does your application demonstrate that workers will have the free and fair choice to join a union and to participate in collective bargaining?



- Are you requiring or encouraging any of the following? Project Labor Agreements, Community Workforce Agreements, Labor Peace Agreements, Collective Bargaining Agreements, Community Benefits Agreements, or Voluntary Recognition ([see definitions](#)). If yes, are you including any of the agreements as a part of your application?
- ✓ Do you have partnerships with unions? Have you included a letter of support from union partners detailing the partnership in your application?
- ✓ Are you offering labor-management training partnerships or setting expectations for contractors to develop labor-management training programs?
- ✓ How are you ensuring workers are aware of their rights, including those below?
 - Are you encouraging and/or requiring the distribution of education materials on workplace rights under the National Labor Relations Act, Davis Bacon Act, EO 11246, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Occupational Safety and Health Act as well as information on whistleblower protection laws including the right to report safety violations free from intimidation and harassment to workers?
- ✓ Are you providing direct individualized information to workers about their status as an employee or independent contractor, their Davis-Bacon Labor classification, and their wage/fringe rates?
- ✓ Have you identified steps you will be taking to raise the quality level of existing jobs, such as jobs in operations or maintenance, related to the project?

Does your application put forward a strong plan for worker training and education for the good-paying jobs? How is the plan inclusive of populations that are underrepresented in the infrastructure workforce?

- ✓ Have you identified the number of skilled trade jobs needed by craft/position type and where you expect gaps? Have you identified job gaps in project management and ongoing operations and maintenance?
- ✓ Have you identified existing programs that successfully train diverse populations and that can be scaled appropriately before project implementation? This can include [high-quality pre-apprenticeship programs](#) and registered apprenticeships.
- ✓ Have you identified populations that are underrepresented in the infrastructure workforce? While underrepresented groups vary based on local demographics and specific jobs, such groups may include women; Black, Latino, Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and other persons of color; people with convictions; and individuals with disabilities.
- ✓ Have you identified existing, successful training programs that have specific expertise in working with these underrepresented populations? What kinds of organizations have you worked with, or do you plan to work with, to ensure that programs that are not currently inclusive of underrepresented populations can improve in this dimension?
- ✓ Did you engage regularly with education and vocational training partners, state and local [workforce development boards](#), unions, [tradeswomen](#), and community groups trusted by the communities they serve to understand which training programs are effective and which populations are not being served by these programs?



- ✓ Based on assessments of the current training landscape, have you identified any new training programs or program components (e.g., services that need to be added to existing programs) that would need to be created? Have you identified what kinds of partners you would be working with to create these programs?
- ✓ Are you planning on leveraging formula and/or discretionary funds, outside of the grant being applied for, to support workforce development? If so, have you provided information about these potential funding efforts? Note that there are some restrictions related to how DOT competitive funding opportunities may be used for project-based workforce development for jobs on the project. See [Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity \(RAISE\) FAQ](#) for a description of those restrictions. Some Notice of Funding Opportunities may assess whether other funds are being leveraged to create more comprehensive and sustainable workforce programs.
- ✓ Are you planning on funding supportive services and direct cash assistance that can help people facing systemic barriers to employment participate and thrive in training, apprenticeship, and employment?
 - Supportive services include including childcare; housing; emergency cash assistance for items such as tools, work clothing, application fees, and other costs of apprenticeship or required pre-employment training; transportation and travel to training and work sites; car repair; and services aimed at helping to retain underrepresented groups like mentoring, support groups, and peer networking. [Note that state highway formula funds can be used for these kinds of services.](#)
- ✓ If you are not planning on funding supportive services, are you partnering with the publicly funded workforce system, community-based organizations, or unions to provide supportive services?
- ✓ Do you plan to put in place a requirement for the use of [registered apprenticeships](#) on the project?
- ✓ Do you provide details on how you are setting up the workforce partnerships necessary to [make registered apprenticeship more inclusive](#)?



Source: USDOT/Getty



Does your application provide information on the policies you plan to incorporate both during procurement and during project implementation that will promote the hiring and retention of underrepresented workers?

- ✓ Do you plan to use local or economic hiring preferences (i.e., hiring goals set for contractors based on geographic areas, geographic areas defined by economic distress, or individual characteristics of workers that make them economically disadvantaged)? If so, have you explained how those local or economic hiring preferences will successfully recruit underrepresented populations? [See FHWA's website for more detail.](#)
- ✓ Will you incorporate explicit agreements to hire from certain workforce programs that serve underrepresented groups? This could include, e.g., direct entry from pre-apprenticeship programs into registered apprenticeship. [See examples of DOT grantees with these kinds of agreements in place.](#)
- ✓ Are you supporting recruitment and retention strategies that can help people facing systemic barriers to employment participate and thrive in training and employment?
 - What steps are you taking to ensure that contractors have effective anti-harassment programs in place in keeping with the recommendations in [this report](#)?
 - Do your contracts include provisions that prohibit discrimination against people with former justice involvement and implement affirmative steps for their recruitment and inclusion?
 - Are you incentivizing the use of workplace coaching or mentoring programs?
 - Are you requiring that contractors audit their promotion policies to remove potential bias against family caregivers?
 - Are you collaborating with the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) in their compliance assistance efforts to ensure that project contractors are complying with [equal employment opportunity requirements](#) under OFCCP's legal authorities?
 - Will you review the history of civil rights violations of contractors seeking participation in projects funded by this grant? Do you explain how you will use the information reviewed, particularly if a history of violations is present?
- ✓ Do you have plans to track data and publish results transparently so that hiring and retention goals can be met?
 - Do you have plans to publish aggregate workforce data, including information on demonstrating good faith efforts for recruiting women, people of color, and other underserved groups? Will the data be collected and reported frequently enough to permit course correction and allow for the deployment of new strategies as needed to ensure that employment opportunities are available to historically underserved workers in your project communities? If you have collected data in the past, are you sharing that in your application to show past success?
 - Do you have plans to conduct regular pay audits to ensure pay equity for workers performing similar work and possessing similar skills?
 - Are you planning to hold meetings that will include local, minority, and women-owned business organizations; community-based organizations trusted by the communities they serve; unions; tradeswomen; contractors; and the project owner as a means of tracking progress?

