FY 2026 Notice of Funding Opportunity

Region 6 Small Business Transportation Technical Assistance Center (SBTTAC)

Office of the Secretary (OST) - Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)

US Department of Transportation (DOT)

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A. BASIC INFORMATION

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), Office of the Secretary (OST), Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU), announces the availability of funding under Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Number OST/OSDBU-2026-SBTTAC-Region 6-FY2026-1 to establish and operate the Region 6 Small Business Transportation Technical Assistance Center (SBTTAC) **formerly known as the Small Business Transportation Resource Centers (SBTRC).**The cooperative agreement is for one award for a 12 months base year with two option years, based on performance.

TOPIC	DESCRIPTION
Issuing Agency	U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), Office of the Secretary (OST), Office of Small and Disadvantaged Utilization (OSDBU)
Funding Opportunity Title	FY 2026 SBTTAC Regional NOFO – Region 6
Announcement Type	Cooperative Agreement
Funding Opportunity Number	OST/OSDBU-2026-SBTTAC-Region 6-FY2026-1
Number of Awards	One (1) for Region 6
Assistance Listing Number	20.910
Objective	To successfully operate and administer a coordinated delivery system that provides access for small businesses to prepare and compete for transportation-related contracts.
Program Overview	The Small Business Transportation Technical Assistance Centers (SBTTACs) consist of regional centers around the country providing technical assistance to small businesses to better enable them to secure loans, bonding, and government contracts. **This funding opportunity is for Region 6 SBTTAC to support small businesses in the states of** Alaska, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, and Guam

Eligible Applicants	A nonprofit, community-based organization, transportation-related trade association, chamber of commerce, college or university, community college, or non-profit organization 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) tax-exempt organization located in Region 6 of the U.S. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and faith-based institutions are encouraged to apply.
Eligible Project Types	To operate and administer a coordinated delivery system that provides access for small businesses to prepare and compete for transportation-related contracts.
Eligible Activities	Capital Infusion Assistance, Training, Counseling, and other Technical Assistance. Referral to the USDOT's National Bonding Education Program (BEP) Outreach and Stakeholders Engagement
Forward Funding	Upfront funding provided at the beginning of the Period of Performance to support startup and initial implementation activities prior to the annual operating period and is not an advance payment for any future option periods.
Cooperative Agreement Funding	$441,559
Cost share/match	The Recipient must provide the required non-Federal cost share through a combination of cash and in-kind contributions, ensuring that no less than 50% of the total match is provided in cash. Up to 50% may be in-kind.
SBA	Small Business Administration
How to apply	Applicants must apply via grants.gov by 11:59 PM EST on August 30, 2026
Application Open	**July 31, 2026**

Questions	Please send questions to SBTTAC@dot.gov

Executive Summary

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), Office of the Secretary (OST), Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU), announces the availability of funding under Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Number OST/OSDBU-2026-SBTTAC-Region 6-FY2026-1 to establish and operate the Region 6 Small Business Transportation Technical Assistance Center (SBTTAC) **formerly known as the Small Business Transportation Resource Centers (SBTRC).**

Authorized under Public Law 95-507 and codified at 15 U.S.C. § 644(k) and 49 U.S.C. 332 (4), the SBTTAC Program is designed to strengthen the capacity, competitiveness, and readiness of small businesses to compete for and perform on Federal, state, local, and private transportation contracts.

In alignment with the Department's priority on Deregulation and Accountability, the program is committed to reducing unnecessary barriers for small businesses while maintaining rigorous financial oversight and full regulatory compliance.
Under this NOFO, OSDBU will award one (1) cooperative agreement to an eligible organization located within Region 6 to operate and administer a coordinated delivery system providing technical assistance and business development support to small businesses in the designated states.

The total Period of Performance is a twelve (12)-month operating period. The Base Year award may include up to two (2) additional option years, subject to satisfactory performance and availability of funds.
SBTTAC recipients are required to deliver measurable, outcome-driven services that include:

- Capital infusion assistance and transactional support for loans, bonding, and other financing instruments;
- Individualized business counseling and technical assistance;
- Structured training workshops and transportation-focused educational programming;
- Outreach and stakeholder engagement across the regional transportation ecosystem;
- Referrals to USDOT programs, including the National Bonding Education Program (BEP)

- Full documentation of services, outcomes, and performance metrics monitored by the OSDBU office via a designated Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.

The program emphasizes data integrity, performance accountability, and regional collaboration. Recipients must meet established Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), comply with all reporting requirements, and demonstrate effective risk management and internal controls consistent with 2 CFR Part 200.
Eligible applicants include nonprofit community-based organizations, transportation-related trade associations, chambers of commerce, colleges and universities, community colleges, faith-based institutions, and other qualifying 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) organizations physically located within the Region 6 service area. Applicants must demonstrate subject-matter expertise in transportation procurement, Federal regulations, and small business technical assistance, as well as the organizational capacity to manage a Federal cooperative agreement.

This award requires non-Federal cost sharing. Recipients must provide the required match in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.306, with no less than fifty percent (50%) of the total match provided as cash contributions.

Applications must be submitted electronically through Grants.gov no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on August 30, 2026.

Additional details regarding eligibility, funding levels, evaluation criteria, deliverables, performance requirements, match obligations, and post-award administration are provided throughout this NOFO.

Notable changes From Prior Year

The **Small Business Transportation Technical Assistance Centers (SBTTAC) Program** represents a modernization and strategic enhancement of the former Small Business Transportation Resource Centers (SBTRC) model. The changes outlined below reflect OSDBU's commitment to strengthening performance accountability, improving data integrity, enhancing regional coordination, and increasing measurable outcomes for small businesses participating in transportation-related contracting.

1. **Strategic Program Rebranding and Performance Focus**
   This shift represents a modernization of the program's core mission, moving from a general support structure to a performance-driven model centered around increased accountability. A critical component of this evolution is the expanded Transportation Industry Scope: while the program continues to serve transportation construction firms, it has broadened its focus to support small businesses across a wider array of transportation sectors, including rail, maritime, transit, and technology. This evolution is guided by a new, standardized national framework and a shared mission statement that ensures consistent service delivery across all regions.

2. **High-Impact Interventions and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

Under the new SBTTAC model, OSDBU has established clearly defined, quantifiable minimum deliverables and KPIs. The SBTTAC model transitions from general outreach to a high-impact, intentional focus on three core performance areas where centers are held to greater accountability:

- **Capital Infusion:** The SBTTAC framework introduces minimum requirements for distinct capital infusion transactions, including support for loans, lines of credit, bonding packages, and other financing instruments. This represents a shift from referral-based support toward documented transactional assistance and measurable financial outcomes.

- **Counseling and Technical Assistance:** The SBTTAC model strengthens the delivery of individualized counseling and targeted technical assistance by establishing clearer expectations for depth, frequency, and documentation. Centers must now provide structured, outcome-oriented counseling that includes business assessments, capability reviews, market readiness evaluations, and tailored action plans. This moves the program away from ad-hoc guidance toward a consistent, data-driven approach that measurably improves small business capacity and readiness for DOT opportunities.

- **Training:** The SBTTAC framework modernizes the program's training requirements by emphasizing high-quality, skill-building workshops that directly enhance small business competitiveness. Training activities must now be strategically designed, curriculum-based, and aligned with national objectives—covering topics such as financial readiness, procurement navigation, safety compliance, bonding education, and digital tools. Centers are required to deliver training that produces trackable learning outcomes, broader reach, and stronger participant engagement.

3. **Regional Restructuring and Operational Capacity**

To improve financial stewardship and operational depth, the program has been restructured from 11 centers into **6 high-capacity regional SBTTACs**. This consolidation allows for significantly increased award amounts—nearly doubling prior funding levels—to attract higher-capacity applicants. Each regional center is now required to maintain a more robust staffing structure, including a full-time Executive Director and dedicated administrative support. To ensure these centers operate at peak efficiency, the program now mandates the use of a designated **Customer Relationship Management (CRM)** system as the official system of record. This ensures all client engagement and performance data are documented in real time, upholding federal data governance standards.

4. **Financial Requirements and Merit Review**

The SBTTAC model clarifies and strengthens cost-sharing and risk management protocols. The program introduces a **tiered match structure**, starting with a 15% match in the Base Year and increasing to 25% by Option Year 2. To ensure financial integrity, at least 50% of the total required match must be provided as cash. The Period of Performance is a **12-month Base Year**, and is supported by a rigorous **three-phase merit review process** and a formal requirement to demonstrate partnerships with the Small Business Administration (SBA), Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), and U.S. Department of Defense's APEX Accelerators to maximize the reach of federal dollars.

5. **Strengthened Risk Management and Compliance Oversight**
The SBTTAC framework places a heightened emphasis on internal controls, data accuracy, financial oversight, and strict compliance with 2 CFR Part 200 and applicable Executive Orders. Recipients are subject to continuous performance monitoring and annual evaluations to ensure programmatic integrity. This framework aligns directly with the Secretary of Transportation's strategic anchor of **"Deregulation &Accountability,"** which prioritizes reducing administrative burdens while strengthening oversight and financial stewardship. By promoting transparent, consistent, and data-driven management, the SBTTAC program sets a high standard for DOT discretionary grant programs and ensures long-term sustainability through demonstrated results.

B. ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for this Cooperative Agreement, an applicant must be an **established nonprofit, community-based organization; transportation-related trade association; chamber of commerce; college or university; community college; faith-based institutions; HBCUs or any other transportation-related nonprofit organization** that has the **documented experience and capacity** necessary to successfully operate and administer a coordinated delivery system that prepares small businesses to compete for transportation-related contracts.

In addition, to be eligible, the applicant organization must:

Organizational Status & Legal Requirements
Applicants must:

1. Be a **U.S.-based 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6)** tax-exempt organization and provide documentation as verification.
   No application will be accepted without proof of tax-exempt status.
2. Be **registered and active in SAM.gov** at the time of grant award (including a valid UEI).
3. Have an **office physically located within one of the states in the region** for which services will be provided.
4. Not be **suspended, debarred, or otherwise excluded** from receiving federal financial assistance under **2 CFR Parts 180 and 1200**.
5. Demonstrate adequate **governance, internal controls, and financial management systems** consistent with **2 CFR 200.303** and **2 CFR 200 Subpart D**.

Demonstrated Subject-Matter Expertise in Transportation Contracting
The applicant organization must demonstrate **verifiable expertise** in the transportation sector, including:

a. **<u>Experience Supporting Transportation-Focused Small Businesses</u>**
Applicants must have:
1) At least **one year of documented and continuous experience** prior to the application date providing outreach and technical assistance to small businesses in the region.
2) Prior experience serving the **transportation community** is highly preferable.
3) Additionally, applicants should demonstrate experience, preferably **5 years or more** in:
   - Federal, state, or local transportation procurement
   - USDOT-funded contracting (FHWA, FTA, FAA, MARAD, etc.)
   - Bonding, certification, and capital access support relevant to transportation contracting

b. **<u>Subject-Matter Experts (SMEs) on Staff or Under Contract</u>**
Applicants must have personnel with demonstrable expertise in:
1) Transportation procurement and compliance
2) Federal regulations including FAR and 2 CFR 200
3) Small business program requirements,
4) One senior-level SME with a minimum of 5 **years of experience** directly related to transportation contracting.

c. **<u>Organizational Capacity to Perform Program Deliverables</u>**
Applicants must demonstrate the organizational capacity to:
1) Provide a **coordinated service delivery system** offering technical assistance to transportation-related small businesses.
2) Support **multi-state regional service delivery.**
3) Maintain sufficient staff and infrastructure to meet required performance metrics, and other requirements. Organizations must also show evidence of:
   (a) Adequate facilities and staffing

(b) Past performance managing federal or state-funded technical assistance Programs
(c) Systems capable of handling financial, administrative, and reporting responsibilities

Ineligible Activities

- In accordance with Executive Order 14173, *Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity*, Federal funds awarded under this NOFO may not be used to fund, promote, encourage, subsidize, or facilitate:
- Racial preferences or discrimination, including the use of race or proxies for race as a selection criterion for employment or program participation;
- The notion that sex is not binary or that sex is a chosen or mutable characteristic;
- Illegal immigration; or
- Initiatives that compromise public safety or promote anti-American values.

Any proposal that includes activities prohibited under Executive Order 14173 will be deemed ineligible for funding.

A complete listing of applicable Federal Barred Funding Activities is set forth in Appendix I, incorporated herein by reference.

Funding Restrictions

All costs must be **eligible, allowable, reasonable, and allocable** under **2 CFR 200 Subpart E**.

- Costs incurred **before award announcement** are not reimbursable.
- Costs incurred **after award announcement but before a Cooperative Agreement is fully executed** are not eligible for reimbursement without explicit written approval under **2 CFR 200.458 (pre-award costs)**.
- Additional restrictions apply to equipment purchases, lobbying, construction, and any cost prohibited under federal regulations.

Prohibited Use of Funds

To comply with federal guidance, project funds (including any money provided by the applicant as a match) may **not** be used to support the following:

- **Racial Preferences:** Programs or activities that provide preferential treatment based on race.
- **Denial of the Sex Binary:** Projects that promote views that the sex of humans is not binary or that sex is a chosen or mutable characteristic
- **Illegal Immigration:** Any activities that support or encourage illegal immigration.
- **Anti-American Values:** Programs or materials that promote values that compromise public safety or promote anti-American values.

Cost Sharing and Match Requirement

The Recipient is responsible for a cost-sharing contribution totaling **15% of the Federal Award**. This ensures a committed partnership in the execution of the SBTTAC mission. To meet this requirement, the following composition rules apply:

- **Minimum Cash Contribution**: At least **50%** of the required match must be provided as a cash contribution. These funds must be documented in accordance with **2 CFR 200.306**.

- **Allowable In-Kind Contributions**: Up to **50%** of the total match may consist of allowable in-kind contributions, such as third-party donations of equipment, space, or professional services.

- **Strict Limitation**: Under no circumstances may the in-kind portion exceed **50%** of the total non-Federal share.

As shown in the financial breakdown below, if the **Total Program Cost** is the sum of Federal and non-Federal funds, the **Required Match** represents the specific 15% portion the applicant must secure. Applicants must ensure that the "Minimum Cash Match" and "Maximum In-Kind Match" lines in their budget stay within these 50/50 parameters to remain compliant with federal guidelines

In-kind contributions may include donated goods, services, facilities, equipment, volunteer services, or non-federal personnel time that directly support approved project activities. All in-kind contributions must be necessary, reasonable, allocable to the project, and valued at fair market value, and must be verifiable from the recipient's records. In-kind match contributions must comply with **2 CFR Part 200, including §200.306 (Cost Sharing or Matching)**, and may not be used to meet matching requirements for another federal award.

Match Composition

Line Item	**12-Months**
Federal Award Amount	$441,559.00
Required Match (15% of Federal Award)	$66,233.85
Minimum Cash Match (50% of Required Match)	$33,116.93
Maximum In-Kind Match (50% of Required Match)	$33,116.93
Total Program Cost (Federal + Match)	**$507,792.86**

Recipients must maintain supporting documentation for all match contributions.

Applicants must refer to **2 CFR 200.306** to review the specific eligibility criteria that effectively prohibit certain sources of matching funds. This regulation ensures that all contributions—whether cash or in-kind—are verifiable, necessary for the project, and originate from non-federal sources that have not been previously committed to another federal award.

C. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Under Public Law 95-507, codified at 15 U.S.C. § 644(k), each Federal agency with procurement powers is required to have an Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) to make Federal procurement more readily accessible to all small businesses. The mission of OSDBU in the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) is to ensure Small Businesses policies and goals of the Secretary of Transportation are implemented in an efficient, and effective manner. The mission of the Small Business Transportation Technical Assistance Center (SBTTAC) Program (formerly known as the SBTRC program) is to expand the capacity and competitiveness of small businesses to compete and perform on transportation-related contracts. OSDBU also administers the provisions of Section 332 of Title 49, which includes the duties of advocacy, outreach, and financial services on behalf of small businesses and the development of programs to encourage, stimulate, promote, and assist small businesses to become better prepared to compete for, obtain, and manage transportation-related contracts and subcontracts. The Department seeks to fund projects that advance the priorities of this Administration as described in DOT's mission statement and across executive orders.

Administrative Priorities

The Department seeks to fund projects that advance the priorities of this Administration as described in DOT's mission statement and across various Executive Orders. To be considered for an award, applicants should demonstrate how their project aligns with one or more of the following core pillars:

- **Infrastructure Investment:** Modernizing and maintaining essential transportation assets to ensure long-term durability and safety.
- **Economic Growth & Workforce Development:** Supporting initiatives that create high-quality jobs, strengthen domestic supply chains, and bolster the national economy.
- **Regulatory Reform:** Streamlining processes to reduce unnecessary burdens and increase the efficiency of project delivery.
- **Performance & Accountability:** Implementing data-driven approaches to ensure transparency and measurable outcomes for every dollar spent.
- **Small Business Participation:** Prioritizing opportunities for small and disadvantaged businesses to compete for and participate in Department-funded contracts.

Small Business Transportation Technical Assistance Center (SBTTAC) Program

The national Small Business Transportation Technical Assistance Center (SBTTAC) program utilizes Cooperative Agreements with chambers of commerce, trade associations, educational institutions, religious institutions and business-centered community-based organizations to establish SBTTACs to provide business training, technical assistance, and information to the USDOT grantees and recipients, prime contractors, and subcontractors. To be effective, the SBTTACs must be active in the local transportation community to identify and communicate opportunities and provide the required technical assistance. Applicants must have established, or demonstrate the ability to establish, working relationships with stakeholders to include the state and local transportation agencies and technical assistance agencies; U.S. Small Business Administration’s (SBA) Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) and U.S. Department of Defense APEX Accelerators; and State DOT’s Supportive Services contractors in their region and state and local governments’ technical assistance programs.

Utilizing these relationships and their expertise, the SBTTACs broad range of technical assistance services —including information dissemination, small business counseling, training, and other targeted support—to small businesses currently engaged in transportation-related work with public and private entities   small businesses currently doing business with public and private entities in the transportation industry.

Effective outreach is critical to the success of the SBTTAC program. For the outreach efforts to be effective, SBTTACs must be familiar with USDOT’s Operating Administrations, USDOT’s funding sources, and how funding is awarded to USDOT recipients of grants and financial assistance, including contractors and subcontractors. SBTTACs must provide outreach to the regional small business transportation community to disseminate information, provide technical assistance, and distribute USDOT-published marketing materials, such as the USDOT Bonding Education Program (BEP) information, procurement related programs hosted by OSDBU, SBTTAC brochures and literature, USDOT’s Procurement Opportunity Forecast, and promote and make referrals to the USDOT National Bonding Education Program (BEP) along with any other materials or Technical Assistance s that USDOT or OSDBU may develop for this purpose. To maximize outreach, the SBTTAC may be called upon to participate in regional and national conferences and seminars. When available, quantities of USDOT publications for on-hand inventory and dissemination at conferences and seminars will be available from OSDBU upon request.

i. Recipient Requirements

The Recipient must complete all required deliverables outlined below to support the effective administration, monitoring, and performance of the Small Business Transportation Technical Assistance Center (SBTTAC). These deliverables represent the core activities and outputs on which the Recipient **will be evaluated** throughout the Period of Performance. They ensure consistent, high-quality service delivery; accurate and timely data reporting; compliance with federal requirements; and achievement of program goals and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

All deliverables must be submitted through the OSDBU-designated systems, including the Customer Relationship Management System (CRM), and must be complete, verifiable, and fully aligned with the expectations established in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), the Terms and Conditions of the Cooperative Agreement, and OSDBU program guidance.

Failure to submit deliverables on time or in compliance with requirements may trigger corrective actions or result in a finding of noncompliance.

The deliverables are as follows:

● **Program Deliverables**

a. **Capital Infusion Assistance:** Provide transactional support for loans, lines of credit, bonding, working capital, and other approved financing instruments, resulting in a **minimum of 120 distinct financing transactions** facilitated (e.g., loan applications, credit lines)-for-small business clients.

   The center shall offer both individual and group counseling each month, delivered in person or virtually (i.e., conference calls and video conferences). Counseling must support clients' ability to pursue transportation-related contracting opportunities and strengthen their business operations.

**Required Targeted Capital Infusion Transactions

Base/Baseline Year
120

b. **Counseling and Technical Assistance:** Deliver a **minimum of 2,028 hours of one-on-one business counseling** to small business clients in areas such as procurement readiness, capability statements, business planning, compliance, certifications, marketing, and access to transportation-related opportunities.

The center shall offer both individual and group counseling each month, delivered in person or virtually (i.e., conference calls and video conferences). Counseling must support clients' ability to pursue transportation-related contracting opportunities and strengthen their business operations.

**Required Targeted Counseling Hours

Base/Baseline Year
2,028

c. **Training:** Conduct **a minimum of 10 structured workshops, webinars, cybersecurity, digital interoperability or training programs** focused on transportation-related business development, procurement readiness, financial management, bonding, safety, contracting, and other approved OSDBU topics. At **least three (3) in-person training sessions**, with **no more than one (1)** in the host state.

<u>Administrative requirements</u>

- General Management, Program Operations & Administration: The Recipient must effectively manage day-to-day program operations to ensure high-quality service delivery, strong administrative controls, and full alignment with OSDBU program expectations. Required responsibilities include:
  1) **Complete an intake form (SF4500) for each small** business being provided **counseling and training and upload form to designated CRM.**
  2) **Utilize the OSDBU CRM** to track, report, and document all activities, including counseling hours, technical assistance, outreach, contract awards, training, and all other services provided.
  3) **Support OSDBU's quarterly and annual evaluation processes** by ensuring data accuracy and completeness, and by providing supplemental narrative information upon request.
  4) **Maintain comprehensive electronic client records** that include client type, dates of assistance, services provided, outcomes achieved, and all required supporting documentation.
  5) **Distribute USDOT and OSDBU informational materials** to the regional small business community and key stakeholders.
  6) **Maintain regular communication with the OSDBU Program Manager** to provide program updates, seek guidance, elevate issues, and ensure consistency with federal expectations.

- **<u>Outreach & Stakeholder Engagement Requirements</u>**
  - **Participate in local, state, regional, and national conferences, seminars, workshops, and events** on behalf of OSDBU to promote program visibility and engagement.
  - **Coordinate with OSDBU and regional partners** to support the administration, implementation, and integration of applicable programs, initiatives, and outreach efforts.

- **<u>DATA / CRM Requirement</u>**
  - The Recipient must use the OSDBU-designated CRM system as the official system of record for all SBTTAC activities. **All clients must be entered into the CRM**, and all program operations—including counseling, outreach, technical assistance, training, engagement, capital infusion support, partnership coordination, deliverables, KPIs, and other measurable outcomes—must be fully, accurately, and timely documented.
  - **Required CRM Documentation:** The Recipient must ensure complete, timely, and verifiable CRM entries for all activities, including but not limited to all **Technical Assistance, Events and Other Activities. The recipient must** ensure that all client information, deliverables, events, and tracked Supplemental Client Activities are updated in real time and, at the latest, by **5:00 p.m. on**

the 28th of each month to support OSDBU's monthly data pull and maintain compliance with OSDBU requirements.

- **Data Governance Requirement**
  The Recipient must use the OSDBU-designated CRM system as the official system of record for all SBTTAC activities. All clients, services, activities, deliverables, KPIs, and other measurable outcomes must be fully, accurately, and timely documented in the CRM. **All data entered the CRM—including client, programmatic, financial, and performance data—is the property of USDOT OSDBU and may not be used, transferred, or disclosed for any non-program purpose.**

- <u>**Supplemental Client Activities**</u>
  In addition to the required KPIs/deliverables, applicants will be encouraged to track other **Supplemental Client Activities** that provide a broader and more comprehensive view of the Center's overall impact. These indicators help demonstrate how technical assistance contributes to real-world business growth, expanded market participation, and increased economic opportunity for small businesses in the transportation sector.

  Although tracking these Supplemental Client Activities is optional, applicants should identify which indicators they intend to track, if any, and describe how they will implement, monitor, and report these activities throughout the Period of Performance (PoP).

  Tracking these supplemental outcomes enables OSDBU and the Centers to:

  - Assess broader program impact beyond core KPIs.
  - Identify emerging business needs and refine service offerings.
  - Strengthen future program planning and strategic decision making.
  - Demonstrate the return on investment (ROI) of federal technical assistance.
  - Capture success stories that highlight growth, readiness, and competitiveness.

These Outreach, Engagement & Business Pipeline Development activities may include:

1. **Opportunity Alignment for Client Firms**
   Identify procurement opportunities for clients that align with their capabilities, readiness, and strategic growth plans. Centers must document the matching process, including the opportunity identified, the rationale for the match, follow-up actions, and resulting outcomes.

2. **Conference Identification & Participation Planning**

Identify transportation-related conferences at the national, regional, state, or local levels. Provide a participation plan that highlights anticipated benefits for small businesses and recommends opportunities for OSDBU involvement when appropriate.

3. **Targeted Outreach at Transportation Events**
   Conduct outreach at sector-specific events to increase awareness of SBTTAC services, expand the small business pipeline, and promote transportation readiness.

4. **Conference Sponsorship & Collaboration**
   With prior OSDBU approval, collaborate with USDOT recipients or subrecipients to sponsor or co-sponsor transportation-related events. Clearly articulate goals, participant outcomes, and follow-up engagement actions**,**

5. **Leveraging USDOT Tools, Platforms & Technical Assistance**
   - Connections MarketPlace (CMP) Utilization Use OSDBU's CMP platform to connect clients with federal agencies, large prime contractors, and technical assistance partners. All CMP connections and associated follow-up activities must be recorded in the OSDBU-designated CRM.
   - **USDOT Procurement Forecast**
     Train clients on how to use the USDOT Procurement Forecast to identify upcoming opportunities. Support clients in preparing for future procurements, developing teaming strategies, and improving competitiveness.

6. **Direct Procurement Support & Navigation**
   Refer clients to OSDBU's Procurement Team for targeted guidance. Facilitate introductions to Modal Contracting Officers, Contract Specialists, or other acquisition personnel who can provide insight into requirements and improve client readiness for competition.

7. **Bonding Readiness & Capacity Outcomes**
   For clients referred to the USDOT National Bonding Education Program, track:

   - Completion of program requirements
   - Bonding secured or increased capacity
   - Total bonding value obtained

These indicators help assess improvements in clients' ability to compete for transportation-related contracts that require bonding.

8. **Contract Awards, Capital & Financial Growth**

Track both the **number** and **dollar value** of contracts secured by assisted businesses across federal, state, local, and private sectors. Document financial outcomes such as:

- **Financial Capacity Building Support**
  Leverage OSDBU's Technical Assistance Network—including sister federal agencies, state and local governments, and financial institutions—to maximize federal Technical Assistance s and provide clients with training and counseling that strengthens financial readiness, improves access to capital, and enhances long-term business competitiveness.
- **Job Creation & Broader Economic Impact**
  Capture and report job creation resulting from SBTTAC-assisted businesses during the PoP.

9. **Other Supplemental Client Activities**
   Participation in tracking Supplemental Client Activities is optional. Centers that choose to participate may select and track between three (3) and five (5) Supplemental Client Activities. Selected activities must be identified in the application and must be reported consistently throughout the performance period in accordance with the requirements of this NOFO and the terms of the Cooperative Agreement.

10. **Cybersecurity and Physical Security Risk Planning (NSM-22)**
    Consistent with **National Security Memorandum-22 (NSM-22), Enhancing the Security and Resilience of United States Critical Infrastructure**, applicants must address cybersecurity and physical security risks associated with the proposed project.

ii. Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) Responsibilities

The OSDBU's responsibilities include:

- Provide consultation and technical assistance in planning, implementing, and evaluating activities under this announcement.
- Provide orientation and training to the applicant organization.
- Monitor the SBTTAC activities, cooperative agreement compliance and overall SBTTAC performance.
- Assist the SBTTAC to develop or strengthen its relationships with Federal, State, and local transportation authorities, other technical assistance organizations, and USDOT Recipients.

- Facilitate the exchange and transfer of successful program activities and information among all SBTTAC regions.
- Provide the SBTTAC with USDOT OSDBU materials and other relevant transportation- related information for dissemination.
- Maintain effective communication with the SBTTAC and inform them of transportation news and contracting opportunities to share with small businesses in their region.
- Provide all required forms to be used by the SBTTAC for reporting purposes under the program.
- Perform an annual performance evaluation of the SBTTAC at the end of the Period of Performance. Satisfactory performance is a condition of continued participation of the organization as an SBTTAC and execution of all option years.
- Conduct annual site visit at SBTTAC location by the Program Manager to review agreement performance, quality of delivery, program files, and the database of businesses served.
- Provide updated Line of Accounting (LOA) and Purchase Order (PO) Number information to SBTTAC.
- Provide CRM database to SBTTAC.

iii. Funding Award Information

Through the SBTTAC initiative, the OSDBU Program Manager partners with regional organizations to deliver business training, technical assistance, and transportation-related support to small businesses across each designated region. SBTTACs are established and funded through Cooperative Agreements between eligible applicants and OSDBU. Each SBTTAC functions as a regional extension of OSDBU and contributes directly to the national mission of the Office.

Under this NOFO, OSDBU will make **one (1)** award.

<u>Period of Performance (PoP):</u>
The total Period of Performance for this cooperative agreement is a **twelve (12) month annual operating period**

The maximum Cooperative Agreement ceiling for this NOFO is **$441,559**.

The anticipated start date for this award will be **October 1, 2026**, with a Period of Performance through **September 30, 2027**. This constitutes a **12-month Base**

Year award, with the option for up to two (2) additional one-year renewals, at the discretion of the U.S. Department of Transportation and subject to the availability of funds.

The approved budget and budget narrative will be incorporated into the Cooperative Agreement and will serve as the basis for financial administration and reimbursement.

Cooperative Agreement Funding Distribution for Region 6 as follows:

Region 6 – Cooperative Agreement Amounts

Annual Operating Period (12 months):

Ceiling Amount: $441,559

Floor Amount: $441,559

Total Award Amount (12-Month Period) – Based on Approved Period of Performance (PoP):

- Total Ceiling (12 months): $441,559

Regional funding amounts are established using OSDBU's analysis of certified small business activity and transportation investment levels. Award amounts are calculated using SBA Advocacy data and a weighted formula that equally considers each state's share of certified small businesses (CSBs) and small business employees (SBEs). Region 6 includes the following states and territories: Alaska, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, and Guam.

Funding Variance Determination

The funding amount for each fiscal year is subject to change and may vary based on the most recent data published in the **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Office of Advocacy's Small Business Profile Annual Report**. OSDBU uses this report to assess national and regional small business trends, including the number of small firms, employment levels, industry distribution, and other relevant indicators to inform program priorities and Technical Assistance allocation.

Each year, OSDBU will review updated SBA small business data and may adjust funding levels to reflect:

- Changes in the small business population within the transportation sector or related industries;
- Economic shifts affecting regional or national small business capacity;
- Emerging needs influencing capital access, technical assistance demand, or procurement readiness; and
- Federal appropriations and U.S. DOT priorities.

Because these data points fluctuate annually, award amounts under this NOFO may increase or decrease from year to year.

Applicants should therefore propose budgets that are **scalable, flexible**, and able to accommodate potential adjustments in future funding periods.

OSDBU will communicate final funding amounts for each fiscal year upon issuance of the **Notice of Award** or other formal written notification.

Notice of Award

OSDBU will notify applicants of selection status via email, Grants.gov, or an official award letter. Selected applicants will receive instructions for accepting the award, completing administrative requirements, and submitting any required revised documents (e.g., budgets, implementation plans, compliance forms).

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified via email and may request a written post-award debriefing within 30 days of receiving their notification.

All awards are contingent upon the availability of funds and satisfactory performance.

Distribution of Funds

Funds may be distributed annually or over multi-year periods and may include Base Year and Option Years. OSDBU may use reimbursement, drawdown, or milestone-based payment methods.

All allowable and unallowable costs must comply with **2 CFR 200 Subpart E – Cost Principles**.

Award Structure

Under this NOFO, this award includes:

- A **12-month annual funding allocation**.

Match Reporting

Recipients must report match contributions according to OSDBU's reporting schedules and documentation requirements. Failure to meet match obligations may result in cost disallowances or award modification.

Award Distribution Notice

Award notices will include instructions regarding:

- Acceptance of the award
- Required pre-award documentation
- System registrations and access (Delphi, PRISM, ASAP, etc.)
- Submission of revised budgets or technical documents
- Onboarding and orientation requirements
- Unsuccessful applicants will also be notified.

Additional Information

- The annual award represents the full 12-month funding allocation.
- Option Year funding (if awarded) will follow the same structure unless amended.
- Award ceilings represent the maximum amount OSDBU may provide; floors represent the minimum amount expected, subject to appropriations.
- All awards are contingent upon the availability of appropriated funds and satisfactory performance.

Additional Administrative Information

Recipients must comply with the following administrative requirements:

- Conditions for amendment or termination of awards
- Procedures for award modifications
- Required system access (e.g., Delphi, PRISM, FEDSIM, or other U.S. DOT systems) prior to the first drawdown
- Submission of all required reports and documentation

D. APPLICATION CONTENT AND FORMAT

Address to Request/Submit Application Package
Applications are located on Grants.gov, and each proposal must be submitted electronically through Grants.gov.

Content and Form of Application Submission Application – Any eligible organization, as defined in **Sections A and B** of this announcement, may submit only one proposal for consideration by OSDBU.

The application must follow the format set forth in this announcement. Applicants should consult Submission Requirements Checklist at the bottom of this section to ensure the content of their applications is responsive to the criteria on which OSDBU will evaluate applications.

Application Format Requirements

Applications must:

- Use 1-inch margins on all sides;
- Be single-spaced and printed in a 12 points font (e.g. Times New Roman);
- Not exceed 35 single-sided pages, excluding any requested attachments;
- Include page numbers at the top of each page;
- Submit all required documentation, attachments, and supporting materials in a single application package. Files must be in PDF format (e.g., spreadsheet-based forms or geospatial files such as Shapefile or KML/KMZ);
- Be submitted electronically through Grants.gov.

Required Application Components

Implementation Plan

At a minimum, applications must include the following components:

1. **Implementation Plan**
   Applicants must submit an Implementation Plan describing how the applicant will carry out all required program activities during the Period of Performance. The Implementation Plan must address, at a minimum, the applicant's approach, implementation timeline, staffing and management structure, partnerships, performance targets, and delivery of all required services identified in **Section C** of this NOFO.

2. **Budget Narrative / Justification**
   Applicants must submit a Budget Narrative (Justification) that clearly explains and supports each cost category included in the proposed project budget. The budget narrative must describe how proposed Federal and non-Federal (matching) costs are reasonable, allowable, allocable, and necessary to carry out the activities described in the applicant's Implementation Plan. The narrative must clearly identify the source, type, and amount of required cash and allowable in-kind matching contributions.

3. **Financial Statements**
   Each application must include the most recent **two (2) years** of the applying organization's financial statements. Audited financial statements are preferred; however, reviewed financial statements are acceptable.

4. **Conflicts of Interest**
   Applicants must submit signed statements from key personnel and all organizational principals certifying that they, or members of their immediate family, do not have relationships with local or State transportation agencies that could create the appearance of a conflict of interest.

5. **Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM)**
   Each applicant must:

   a. Be registered in **SAM** prior to applying;
   b. Provide a valid **UEI** with the proposal; and
   c. Maintain an active SAM registration with current information throughout the period during which it has an active Federal award or an application under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

6. **Standard Form 424 (SF-424): Application for Federal Assistance**
   All applicants must submit a completed and signed SF-424. This form is the primary authorized signature for the application and must be signed by an authorized

representative of the applicant organization. The SF-424 must include a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) that matches the organization's registration in SAM.gov.

7. **Standard Form 424A (SF-424A): Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs**
   In addition to the Budget Narrative, applicants must complete the SF-424A to provide a structured breakdown of costs by object class category. The totals on the SF-424A must match the totals provided in the Budget Narrative and the SF-424.

8. **Proof of Tax-Exempt Status (if applicable/required)**
   All proposals must include a copy of the IRS Tax Exempt Status notification. Applications that do not include this will not be considered complete.

9. DOT may not make a Federal award to an applicant until all SAM and UEI requirements are met. Failure to comply may result in the applicant being deemed **ineligible** for award.

10. **Cybersecurity and Physical Security Risk Planning (NSM-22)** Consistent with **National Security Memorandum-22 (NSM-22), Enhancing the Security and Resilience of United States Critical Infrastructure**, applicants must address cybersecurity and physical security risks associated with the proposed project.

    Applicants must describe how they will:

    - Identify and assess relevant cyber and physical risks;
    - Implement appropriate safeguards and mitigation measures;
    - Protect sensitive data, systems, facilities, and personnel; and
    - Ensure continuity of operations in the event of disruptions.
    - A concise Cybersecurity and Physical Security Risk Plan (maximum 2–3 pages) must be included in the application narrative or as an attachment.

    Failure to address these requirements may affect application eligibility or merit review.

Submission Table/Checklist

To ensure your application is processed efficiently and meets all federal requirements, please refer to the table below. This **Submission Table** serves as a mandatory checklist outlining all required files, their specific naming conventions, and any applicable page limits.

Document Name	Requirement	Format	Notes
SF-424: Application for Federal Assistance	Required	Form	Standard form found in the application package.
SF-424A: Budget Information (Non-Construction)	Required	Form	Must align with amounts requested in the Budget Narrative.
Project Narrative	Required	PDF	Limited to 25 pages; **must address all evaluation criteria** using standardized lead clauses (e.g., "Within the application, demonstrate the extent to which…").
Budget Narrative and Detail	Required	PDF/Excel	Itemized breakdown of costs by year and category. Must include language regarding **Grant Funds, Sources, and Uses of Project Funds**.
Regional Service Plan	Required	PDF	Detailed map and strategy for the specific SBTTAC region.
Indirect Cost Rate Agreement	If Applicable	PDF	Required if claiming indirect costs (unless using de minimis).
SF-LLL: Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	Required	Form	Required even if no lobbying is being reported.
Resumes of Key Personnel	Required	PDF	For the Project Director and primary technical staff.
Cybersecurity & Risk Plan	Required	PDF	Must include physical and cyber risk planning language per **NSM-22;** 2-3 pages
Proof of Tax-Exempt Status	(if applicable/ required)	PDF	A single PDF file
Letters of Support/Commitment	Optional	PDF	Consolidated into a single PDF file.

Submission Instructions & Naming Conventions

To ensure your application is processed efficiently, please adhere to the following file naming conventions and departmental requirements:

1. **Naming Format**

   - **Format:** [Lead Organization Name]_[Document Name]Region X_SBTTAC2026.pdf
   - **Example:** ABC_University_Project_Narrative_SBTTAC2026.pdf

2. **Integration of Departmental Priorities**

   Applications should not list Administration priorities as a separate section. Instead, **incorporate these priorities into the program description and project narrative**. Key categories for alignment include:

   - Infrastructure Investment and Economic Growth.
   - Workforce Development and Regulatory Reform
   - Performance, Accountability, and Small Business Participation

Sharing of Application Information

Applications submitted in response to this NOFO may be shared within USDOT and other Federal entities for the purpose of review, evaluation, oversight, or coordination of Federal assistance programs.

Information submitted as part of an application may also be subject to public disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, and applicable USDOT regulations (49 CFR Part 7).

If an applicant believes that any portion of its submission contains proprietary, confidential commercial, or trade secret information, the applicant must:

1. Clearly mark the front page of the submission with the notation **"Contains Confidential Business Information (CBI)"**;
2. Mark each affected page as "CBI"; and
3. Clearly identify the specific information claimed as confidential.

USDOT will protect properly identified confidential information to the extent permitted by applicable law. However, USDOT makes no guarantee that information will be withheld if it does not meet applicable legal standards for exemption.

By submitting an application under this NOFO, the applicant acknowledges and consents to the sharing of application materials for official governmental purposes.

E. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES

Submission Method

Applicants **must apply via Grants.gov**. All application materials must be uploaded and submitted electronically through the Grants.gov portal. **OSDBU will not accept mailed, emailed, or hand-delivered submissions.**

Submission Deadline

Applications must be submitted in **Grants.gov no later than 11:59 PM Eastern Time (ET) on August 30, 2026.**

Applicants are **strongly encouraged** to submit early to avoid delays caused by Grants.gov system congestion, registration issues, or technical errors.

Complete Application Requirement (Mandatory)

Applications must include **all required forms, narratives, and attachments** identified in this NOFO and in the Submission Requirements Checklist

Failure to submit a complete application package by the deadline will result in the application being deemed ineligible and it will not be reviewed.

Incomplete, partially uploaded, or late applications **will not** advance to the merit review phase.

Application Submission Table

Applicants must reference the Submission Table in Section D to verify that all required components, forms, narratives, attachments, and supporting documentation are included **prior to submission**.

The checklist is provided as an aid to applicants; however, **the applicant bears full responsibility** for ensuring the submission is complete and meets all formatting, eligibility, and submission requirements.

F. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

OSDBU will award the cooperative agreement using a **best-value approach**. This section describes the evaluation criteria, scoring structure, and the three-phase review and selection process used to assess applications for completeness, responsiveness, technical merit, and overall value.

Merit Review Criteria

Applications will be evaluated using the following **seven 7** business days **weighted criteria**:

a. Approach & Strategy (25 Points) Applicants must present a comprehensive, results-driven strategy and work plan demonstrating how they will deliver all required SBTTAC services across the full regional service area. Proposals must clearly explain the overall methodology, service delivery model, and implementation timeline, including activities such as capital infusion support, counseling, training, outreach, business analyses, market research, and feasibility assessments. Applicants must justify the proposed headquarters location and demonstrate how it supports effective regional service delivery. Proposals should include specific, measurable, and time-bound objectives that improve small business readiness, strengthen access to capital and contracting opportunities, and increase small business participation in transportation projects. The clarity, feasibility, innovation, and potential impact of the proposed strategy will determine the score for this criterion.

b. Stakeholder & Technical Assistance Network (25 Points) Applicants must demonstrate strong existing regional relationships and a clear plan for building and coordinating a robust technical assistance network. Proposals should describe experience partnering with primes, subcontractors, small business support organizations, educational institutions, regional technical assistance entities, and other relevant stakeholders. Applicants must detail how they will collaborate with partners to connect small businesses with technical, financial, and capacity-building Technical Assistance s. A regionally informed outreach strategy must describe how targeted populations will be engaged throughout the Period of Performance. The strength, depth, and feasibility of the applicant's engagement and network-building approach will guide the score for this criterion.

c. Organizational & Staff Capability (20 Points) Applicants must demonstrate that their organization has the experience, infrastructure, and staffing capacity to successfully deliver SBTTAC services. Proposals must identify key personnel, clearly define roles and responsibilities, and specify time commitments. Resumes must show relevant expertise in technical assistance, federal program management, grants administration, fiscal oversight, and performance reporting. Applicants must describe their organizational facilities, administrative systems, financial management controls, and prior experience supporting transportation-related small businesses. Proposals should also address the organization's ability to leverage volunteer support and secure matching or supplemental Technical Assistance.

- **Staff Requirements**
  - The **Executive Director** must serve as the principal individual responsible for management, oversight, and execution of SBTTAC activities.
  - A **full-time Staff Assistant** or equivalent key personnel must also be designated to support administration and operations.

- Both positions must be **full-time and onsite**, unless OSDBU provides prior written approval.
- Salaries must be consistent with prevailing regional rates and may not exceed the **SES Level I salary cap**.

- **Staffing Plan Evaluation** OSDBU will evaluate the Staffing Plan based on the extent to which it:
    1. Demonstrates sufficient staff education, credentials, and experience;
    2. Clearly defines roles, responsibilities, and accountability lines; and
    3. Presents a realistic and credible capacity to implement SBTTAC activities. Note: A clear, well-aligned staffing narrative is required.

d. Cost Proposal & Budget Effectiveness (20 Points) Applicants must submit a complete and accurate 12-month budget that distinguishes Federal and matching contributions. Proposed costs must align directly with the Implementation Plan and demonstrate adequate Technical Assistance s for staffing, travel, supplies, and other program requirements. Costs must be reasonable, allowable, allocable, and justified in accordance with applicable Federal cost principles. The budget must demonstrate meaningful match contributions, including cash and in-kind support—and must reflect efficient, innovative, and cost-effective program implementation.

e. Risk Management & Program Compliance (10 Points) Applicants must demonstrate strong internal controls, oversight structures, and quality assurance processes that ensure compliance with Federal requirements and safeguard Federal funds. Proposals must identify potential risks—such as staff turnover, service disruptions, financial inaccuracies, data integrity issues, or delays in deliverables—and describe how these risks will be mitigated. Applicants must outline processes to ensure timely reporting, proper documentation, accurate performance tracking, strong financial controls, and effective compliance with all terms of the cooperative agreement.

Ratings

Each criterion will be assigned one of the following ratings:

- **Highly Recommended (HR)**
- **Recommended (R)**
- **Not Recommended (NR)**

Applications will then receive an overall proposal rating of either Highly Recommended, Recommended, and not Recommend. Overall rating of **Highly Recommended (HR)** will advance to Phase II. Phase II successful applicants will advance to Phase III

Consideration of Applications:
In the event that no application receives a rating of **"Highly Recommended,"** the Department will consider all applications rated **"Recommended"** for potential award.

Three-Phase Review and Selection Process

Phase I – Eligibility, Completeness, and Merit Review OSDBU will screen applications for eligibility, completeness, and compliance with Section D and Section E requirements. Incomplete, non-responsive, or late applications will be deemed **ineligible** and will not move forward. Eligible applications will be evaluated by the Merit Review Team using the weighted criteria described in Section F. Only applicants receiving an **overall HR rating** will advance to the Second-Level Review. Instructions for Round Two will be provided **only** to qualifying applicants. Applicants advancing from Phase I of the Merit Evaluation Process must participate in a Formal Presentation to OSDBU to further assess the applicant's organizational and staffing capabilities, budget effectiveness, and risk management and program compliance approach.

This phase is intended to provide OSDBU with additional insight into the applicant's operational readiness, implementation strategy, management capacity, staffing structure, financial and program management capabilities, and overall ability to successfully execute the SBTTAC Program.

Areas of Assessment

The Formal Presentation may include, but is not limited to, assessment of the following areas:

- **Organizational & Staff Capabilities:** The overall organizational structure, qualifications of key personnel, staffing approach, and long-term operational capacity of the proposed team.
- **Budget Effectiveness:** The efficiency, feasibility, reasonableness, and alignment of the proposed budget with the applicant's technical and operational approach.
- **Risk Management & Program Compliance:** The applicant's strategy for mitigating operational, financial, and performance risks, while ensuring adherence to applicable Federal requirements, cooperative agreement terms, reporting obligations, and program guidelines.

Notification of Advancement

Qualified applicants selected to advance to Phase II will be notified within five (5) business days following completion of Phase I scoring.

Presentation Format

Formal Presentations may occur:

- In-person at the applicant's office or proposed operating location;
- USDOT Headquarters; or
- Virtually via Zoom or another Department-approved platform.

OSDBU reserves the right to conduct a site visit, request supplemental documentation, or schedule follow-up discussions as part of this phase of the evaluation process.

Time Allocation

Applicants should plan for:

- A sixty (60) minute presentation; and
- Up to a fifteen (15) minute Question and Answer (Q&A) session.

Standardized Questions

To support consistency and fairness in the evaluation process, each applicant participating in the Formal Presentation phase will be asked the same three (3) standardized questions by the OSDBU review team.

Presentation Expectations

Applicants should ensure that personnel responsible for executive oversight, program implementation, financial management, and day-to-day operations are available to participate in the presentation and respond to questions from the OSDBU review team. Applicants may also be asked to provide additional supporting documentation or clarification during or following the presentation process.

Purpose: To validate alignment between the written proposal and the operational approach, confirm staffing, and ask clarifying questions.

Phase II: Presentation to OSDBU
Applicants advancing from Phase I must participate in a Formal Presentation to OSDBU to further assess organizational and staff capabilities, budget effectiveness, and risk management and program compliance approaches. Qualified applicants will be notified within five (5) business days following the completion of Phase I scoring. Presentations may occur in-person at the applicant's office, at USDOT Headquarters, or virtually via Zoom or another Department-approved platform. OSDBU reserves the right to conduct a site visit or request additional information. Applicants should plan for a 60-minute presentation and up to a 15-minute Q&A session. To ensure consistency and fairness, each applicant will be asked the same three (3) standardized questions. The presentation's purpose is to validate alignment between the written proposal and operational approach, confirm staffing and organizational readiness, and allow OSDBU to ask clarifying questions regarding the applicant's implementation strategy and overall capacity to successfully execute the SBTTAC Program**.**

Phase III: Senior Review Team (SRT)

Following completion of Phase II: Presentation (Applicant) to the OSDBU Team, Highly Recommended (HR) applicants may advance to Phase III evaluation by the Senior Review Team

(SRT). The SRT consists of senior Departmental officials who conduct a strategic assessment of HR applicants, evaluating demonstrated capacity to successfully advance the SBTTAC mission and alignment with the Administration's priorities and the Secretary's Strategic Plan.

During this phase, the SRT will review materials and findings developed throughout the merit review process, including written applications, supporting documentation, organizational and financial information, performance measures, technical evaluations, and Phase II presentation materials and responses.

The SRT will provide written assessments based on the following areas:

Demonstrated Ability to Advance the Successful Execution of the SBTTAC Mission

The assessment may consider:

- Experience delivering technical assistance, procurement counseling, business development, and capacity-building services to small businesses;
- Operational readiness, implementation planning, and demonstrated ability to execute proposed activities within established timelines and performance expectations; and
- Evidence of sustainability, scalability, and measurable economic impact.

Particular emphasis may be placed on applicants demonstrating a clear results-driven operational approach that produces measurable outcomes, strengthens the domestic small business industrial base, and improves access to federal procurement and economic opportunity.

Understanding of the Administration's Priorities and the Secretary's Strategic Plan

The assessment may consider:

- Demonstrated understanding of Administration priorities related to economic competitiveness, workforce development, domestic supply chain resilience, and small business growth;
- Alignment of proposed activities with Departmental strategic goals, policy objectives, and program priorities; and
- Ability to demonstrate measurable public value and long-term impact.

Applicants demonstrating both strong operational capability and alignment with strategic priorities may receive enhanced consideration during final funding recommendations.

The SRT will prepare a concise consensus memorandum addressed to the OSDBU Director summarizing findings for each HR applicant and identifying recommended applicants.

The memorandum will reflect a unified assessment and serve as a basis to support final award decisions.

The SRT will provide the OSDBU Team with a list of “Recommended” applicants Following completion of all three phases of the review process, final award selections will be made by the OSDBU Director,

Risk Review and Responsibility Determination As required by **2 CFR § 200.206**, OSDBU will conduct a risk review to assess financial stability, management systems, and audit history.

Intergovernmental Review (EO 12372): This funding opportunity is subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." OSDBU will use the process described in **Exhibits to OSDBU Agreement Fiscal Year 2026 (Appendix I)** to ensure appropriate state and local consultation. Applicants should check the list of policy requirements in **Appendix I** to determine if their state participates in the SPOC process.

Selection and Notification: Following the completion of all review phases, the selected recipient will be notified within **three (3) days from selection,** first by phone and then in writing.

No Appeal Process: The Department’s funding decisions are final. Applicants are not entitled to appeal the selection or non-selection of their application. The Department will not review or reconsider funding decisions except in cases where there is a clear administrative error in the evaluation process.

G. AWARD NOTICES

Following the evaluation, OSDBU will announce the awarded applicant with a written Notice of Funding Award. The notice will also include the cooperative agreement for signature. Unsuccessful applicants will also be notified.

Financial Management and Payment Procedures

Awards under this NOFO are administered strictly on a **reimbursement basis**. Funds shall not be disbursed in advance. To receive payment for allowable costs incurred, recipients must adhere to the following procedures:

- **Utilize Delphi:** Recipients must register in and utilize the **Delphi Financial Management System**, the official financial management system used by the U.S. Department of Transportation.
- **Invoice Upload:** Itemized invoices must be uploaded directly to the **Delphi eInvoicing portal** (the agency’s official financial management system) for review and approval by the OSDBU Program Manager.

- **Supporting Documentation:** Recipients must maintain and provide all necessary supporting documentation to verify that costs are eligible, allowable, reasonable, and allocable under **2 CFR 200 Subpart E**.
- **Approval Process:** Payments will be processed only after the successful verification of required deliverables and the approval of invoices within the Delphi system.

All awards are contingent upon the availability of funds and satisfactory performance.

H. <u>POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION</u>

- Critical Infrastructure Security, Cybersecurity and Resilience: It is the policy of the United States to strengthen the security and resilience of its critical infrastructure against all hazards, including physical and cyber risks, consistent with National Security Memorandum (NSM-22) on Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience, and the National Security Memorandum on Improving Cybersecurity for Critical Infrastructure Control Systems. Each applicant selected for Federal funding must demonstrate, prior to the signing of the cooperative agreement, effort to consider and address physical and cyber security risks relevant to the transportation mode and type and scale of the project. Projects that have not appropriately considered and addressed physical and cyber security and resilience in their planning, design, and project oversight, as determined by the Department and the Department of Homeland Security, will be required to do so before receiving funds."
- Domestic Preference Requirements: As expressed in Executive Order 14005, 'Ensuring the Future Is Made in All of America by All of America's Workers' (86 FR 7475), the executive branch should maximize, consistent with law, the use of goods, products, and materials produced in, and services offered in, the United States. Funds made available under this notice are subject to the domestic preference requirement at the Build America, Buy America Act (BABA), Public Law 117-58, §§ 70901-52. The Department expects all applicants to comply with that requirement.

- Performance and Program Evaluation: As a condition of grant award, grant recipients may be required to participate in an evaluation undertaken by DOT or another agency or partner. The evaluation may take different forms such as an implementation assessment across grant recipients, an impact and/or outcomes analysis of all or selected sites within or across grant recipients, or a benefit/cost analysis or assessment of return on investment. DOT may require applicants to collect data elements to aid the evaluation and/or use information available through other reporting. Grant recipients must agree to: (1) make records available to the evaluation contractor or DOT staff; (2) provide access to program records, and any other relevant documents to calculate costs and benefits; (3) in the case of an impact analysis, facilitate the access to relevant information as requested; and (4) follow evaluation procedures as specified by the evaluation contractor or DOT staff."

- Compliance with Federal Law and Policies: Except where prohibited by court order "the applicant assures and certifies, with respect to any application and awarded Project under this NOFO, that it will comply with all applicable Federal laws, regulations, executive orders, policies, guidelines, and requirements as they relate to the application, acceptance, and use of Federal funds and will cooperate with Federal officials in the enforcement of Federal law, including cooperating with and not impeding U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and other Federal offices and components of the Department of Homeland Security in the enforcement of Federal law."

- Federal Anti-Discrimination:
  - Except where prohibited by court order, "pursuant to Executive Order 14173, Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity, as a condition of grant award, each Recipient must agree that its compliance in all respects with all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws is material to the government's payment decisions for purposes of section 3729(b)(4) of title 31, United States Code."
  - Except where prohibited by court order, "pursuant to Executive Order 14173, Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit- Based Opportunity, as a condition of grant award, each Recipient must certify that it does not operate any programs promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives that violate any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws."

1. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All awards issued under this NOFO will be administered in accordance with the **Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 C.F.R. Part 200)** and all other applicable Federal statutes, regulations, and Executive Orders.

This program is subject to Executive Order 14173. Compliance with the Federal Barred Funding Activities identified in (Appendix I) is a condition of award acceptance and must be maintained throughout the Period of Performance. Failure to comply may result in cost disallowance, suspension, termination, or other enforcement action consistent with 2 CFR § 200.340.

A complete listing of applicable requirements is incorporated by reference and set forth in Appendix I, which is attached to this NOFO.

As a condition of award, recipients must:

- **Comply with Executive Order 14173** and certify that compliance with all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws is material to the Government's payment decisions consistent with 31 U.S.C. § 3729(b)(4).
- **Certify Prohibited Activities Compliance:** Federal funds shall not be used to fund, promote, or facilitate activities prohibited under Executive Order

14173, including Federal barred funding activities as defined in the OSDBU Exhibit.

- **Comply with Exhibit Requirements:** Adhere to all statutes, regulations, Executive Orders, and Prohibited Activities set forth in the **OSDBU Agreement Fiscal Year 2026**(Appendix I).
- **Maintain Conflict of Interest Safeguards:** Maintain signed certifications from key personnel confirming the absence of actual or apparent conflicts of interest.
- **Provide Required Assurances:** Assure compliance with all applicable Federal laws, regulations, executive orders, and policies governing the acceptance and use of Federal funds.

  If a court order bars enforcement of a specific condition for a particular recipient, the Department will comply with such order for the duration it remains in effect.

2. Financial Management and Payment Procedures

Awards are administered strictly on a **reimbursement basis**.

Recipients must:

- Be registered in and utilize the **Delphi Financial Management System** for all payment processing.
- Submit itemized invoices through Delphi for review and approval by the OSDBU Program Manager.
- Ensure all costs comply with **2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart E (Cost Principles)**.
- Obtain prior written approval for any pre-award costs. Costs incurred before full execution of the Cooperative Agreement are not reimbursable without explicit written authorization.
- Maintain documentation supporting the required non-Federal cost share. At least **50 percent of the total match must be provided in cash**, unless otherwise approved.

3. Reporting and Performance Monitoring

Recipients must comply with all reporting requirements contained in this NOFO, the Cooperative Agreement, and applicable Federal regulations to ensure program oversight, financial accountability, and performance measurement.

a. Monthly Data Reporting

Recipients must update all client information, deliverables, events, and Supplemental Client Activities in the OSDBU-designated CRM in real time and no later than **5:00 p.m. ET on the 28th of each month** for OSDBU reporting purposes.

b. Quarterly Reporting

Recipients must submit:

- Quarterly programmatic progress reports detailing:
  - Major accomplishments and milestones
  - Status of required deliverables
  - Outreach, training, counseling, and partnership activities
  - Risks, challenges, or delays
  - Planned activities for the next reporting period
- Quarterly Financial Status Reports (SF-425)

c. Annual Reporting

The **base Period of Performance is twelve (12) months**, consisting of:

- A twelve (12) month annual operating period.

The Annual Report for the base period shall cover the twelve (12) month operating period. If exercised, option years will consist of twelve (12) months each and require annual reporting on the same basis.

The Annual Report must include, at a minimum:

- Summary of accomplishments and results achieved
- Annual performance metrics and analysis against targets
- Outreach, engagement, and partnership activities
- Business outcomes (e.g., contracts awarded, capital accessed, jobs created or retained)
- Financial summary, including expenditures and match compliance
- Lessons learned and recommendations

Annual Reports must follow OSDBU's required format and guidance and will be used to evaluate overall program effectiveness and compliance.

4. Audit and Federal Compliance Requirements

Non-Federal entities expending $750,000 or more in Federal funds during their fiscal year must comply with Single Audit requirements under **2 C.F.R. Subpart F**.
Audit reports must be submitted to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse.
Entities below the threshold remain subject to record retention and review requirements.

5. **Monitoring and Enforcement**

   USDOT OSDBU may conduct risk-based monitoring, desk reviews, and site visits to ensure compliance.

   Failure to comply with award terms and Federal requirements may result in enforcement actions consistent with **2 C.F.R. §§ 200.339–200.340**, including corrective action, payment withholding, suspension, or termination.
6. Additional Federal Compliance Requirements
   In addition to the requirements outlined above, recipients must comply with all applicable Federal statutes, regulations, and government-wide requirements, including but not limited to:
   - **2 C.F.R. Part 200 (Uniform Guidance)**
   - **Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting requirements**
   - **SAM.gov registration and annual renewal requirements**
   - Record retention requirements under **2 C.F.R. §§ 200.334–200.338**
   - Any additional terms and conditions included in the Cooperative Agreement

   Noncompliance with applicable Federal requirements may result in enforcement action and may affect eligibility for current or future Federal awards.

I. AWARD SUMMARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK

The following summary consolidates the funding structure and administrative mandates for the **FY 2026 Small Business Transportation Technical Assistance Center (SBTTAC)** program. All award recipients must adhere to the standardized federal requirements and the specific policy mandates outlined in the attached **Exhibits**.

1. **Financial Award Overview**

   - **Award Instrument:** This is a **Cooperative Agreement**.
   - **Base Period of Performance:** Twelve (12) month annual operating period.
   - **Option Years:** Up to two (2) additional one-year renewals may be awarded based on performance and fund availability.
   - **Funding Mechanism:** Awards are administered strictly on a **reimbursement basis**.
   - **Award Ceiling:** The maximum total ceiling for the 12-month Base Year is **$441,559**.

2. **Mandatory Policy Documents & Appendices**

   As a condition of the award, recipients must comply with all statutes and Executive Orders set forth in the following documents:

- **Exhibits to OSDBU - dated March 30, 2026** (Appendix I), contain the complete listing of applicable statutes, regulations, and **Federal Barred Funding Activities**. This document sets forth the full text of policy requirements and determines state participation in the Intergovernmental Review process.
- **Executive Order 14173:** Prohibits the use of federal funds for activities that facilitate racial preferences, deny the sex binary, or compromise public safety. Compliance with this E.O. is material to the government's payment decisions.
- **National Security Memorandum-22 (NSM-22):** Requires recipients to maintain a **Cybersecurity and Physical Security Risk Plan** to protect critical infrastructure and sensitive data.

3. **Cost Sharing and Match Requirements**

Recipients are required to provide a non-federal cost share to support the total program cost. This match is a mandatory commitment and must be structured according to the following composition rules:

- **Required Match Proportion**: Applicants must contribute a non-federal match totaling **15% of the Total Program Costs**.
- **Minimum Cash Contribution**: To ensure financial sustainability, at least **50% of the total required match** must be provided as a cash contribution. These funds must be documented in accordance with **2 CFR 200.306**.
- **In-Kind Contribution Limit**: While the Department allows for flexibility, no more than **50% of the required match** may consist of allowable in-kind contributions.
- **Allowable In-Kind Examples**: In-kind contributions may include donated goods, professional volunteer services, or the use of equipment and space directly benefiting the project.
- **Valuation and Documentation**: All in-kind contributions must be valued at **fair market value** and must be strictly verifiable from the recipient's records.
- **Alignment with Application**: All match amounts—both cash and in-kind—must align exactly with the figures presented in the **SF-424A** and the **Budget Narrative**

4. **Consolidated Reporting & Compliance Schedule**

Requirement	**System of Record**	**Deadline**
Client & KPI Data	OSDBU CRM	Real-time; no later than 5:00 p.m. ET on the 28th of each month.
Invoicing	Delphi eInvoicing Portal	As incurred monthly (Reimbursement only).

Requirement	System of Record	Deadline
Progress Reports	OSDBU CRM	Quarterly, Annual (written).
Financial Status (SF-425)	OSDBU DELPHI	Quarterly.
Annual Evaluation	OSDBU-Designated System	End of each 12-month operating period.
Single Audit	Federal Audit Clearinghouse	Annually (if Federal expenditures exceed $750,000).

J. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT

For further information regarding this notice, all inquiries must be submitted in writing to **SBTTAC@dot.gov**. To ensure applicants receive accurate, consistent, and official guidance regarding eligibility, program requirements, or application procedures, applicants are strongly encouraged to contact USDOT directly and to refrain from seeking information through intermediaries or third parties.

K. OTHER INFORMATION

Protection of Confidential Business Information

All information submitted as part of or in support of any application, shall use publicly available data or data that can be made public and methodologies that are accepted by industry practice and standards, to the extent possible. If the application includes information the applicant considers to be a trade secret or confidential commercial or financial information, the applicant should do the following: (1) Note on the front cover that the submission "Contains Confidential Business Information (CBI)"; (2) Mark each affected page "CBI"; and (3) Highlight or otherwise denote the CBI portions. The USDOT protects such information from disclosure to the extent allowed under applicable law. In the event USDOT receives a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for the information, USDOT will follow the procedures described in its FOIA regulation at 49 CFR 7.17. Only information that is ultimately determined to be confidential under that procedure will be exempt from disclosure under FOIA.

APPENDICES

(please click here to see Appendices)