

ADS NOFO Webinar: January 24, 2019

Closed Captioning Transcript

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Welcome to the Overview and Application Information for Automated Driving Systems (ADS) Demonstration Grants conference call. All participants are in listen only mode. Press star zero for assistance. The conference is being recorded. I will turn the conference over to U.S. DOT Center.

Hello everyone and welcome to today's webinar. The overview and application information for the Automated Driving Systems Demonstration Grants. This webinar is brought to you by the U. S. Department of Transportation.

In addition to listening, to this webinar, via audio, you can also follow along with the live closed-captioned feature on the bottom of your screen. Assistive devices like TTY are also available. If you choose to use assistive devices, please contact your preferred service and provide them with the AT&T connection information, 802 60 0718. With an access code of 462499. This information is also available in the bottom left of your screen.

We encourage your participation throughout today's webinar and ask folks to participate by submitting questions in the Q&A pod, which will be available on your screen throughout the webinar. We will address questions at the end of the presentation. Webinar attendees and participants, please note, the webinar Q&A chat box transcript and video will be posted and made publicly available on www.transportation.gov/AV/Grants shortly after this webinar.

Questions posted in the chat box may be answered during the webinar or after the webinar. Questions relevant to the NOFO that are answered after the webinar will be posted on the public grant website.

If your organization would like to voluntarily share its contact information with the other webinar participants, you may choose to provide your organization's name, relevant contact information, and a brief description of your organization, in the name and organization box on the left-hand side.

You may have also noticed our web links pod on the left-hand side of your screen. This is where you will find links relevant to today's presentation.

Please note that we do have a disclaimer. This webinar will be conducted as a virtual forum and will help potential applicants gather additional information about this funding opportunity, and ask specific questions. Participation in this webinar is not mandatory to submit an application under this notice of funding opportunity. As soon as possible after the webinar, the U. S. DOT will post this webinar recording and presentation material at www.transportation.gov/AV/grants.

Today's presentation will begin with Finch Fulton, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy, from the Office of the Secretary of Transportation-Policy.

The next speaker is Sujeesh Kurup, a Transportation Policy Specialist, also from the Office of the Secretary of Transportation-Policy. He will provide a program overview.

Shortly after, Mohammed Yousuf, a Research Transportation Specialist, from the Federal Highway Administration, will discuss the NOFO's priorities and requirements.

Then we have Ariel Gold, The ITS-JPO Data Program Manager to discuss data management.

Finally, Sarah Tarpgaard, the Contracting Officer/Agreement Officer from FHWA will discuss the application process, review and selection of awardees, and grant administration info.

At the end, we will have a Q&A session.

And now let me turn it over to Mohammed Yousuf.

Good afternoon everyone, and welcome to this webinar. To kick off the webinar, we are happy to have Finch Fulton with us, he is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation-Policy. He is responsible for the ADS demonstration grants. With that, welcome.

Great, thank you and good afternoon everybody. We are excited to be here today. Fortunately this program is being run out of Federal Highway, which is fully funded. So we don't anticipate this part of the process being impacted by the shutdown, nor do we expect the timing to be affected because of the ongoing shutdown.

As many of you know, back in October Secretary Chao released updated guidance called "Preparing for the Future of Transportation-Automated Vehicles 3.0"

Now this builds upon her previous guidance Automated Driving Systems 2.0- A Vision for Safety. But AV-3.0 expands the scope to all surface on road transportation systems and was developed through the input from a diverse set of stakeholder engagements throughout the nation. Probably many of you were involved in that.

This guidance structure has three key areas; advancing multi-modal safety, reducing policy uncertainty, and outlining a process for working with the US DOT.

Now AV-3.0 still serves as the beginning of a national discussion about the future of our on road transportation-surface transportation systems. So one of the key aspects discussed on the release of the AV-3.0 were these automated driving system demonstration grants.

These grants aim together significant safety data to inform rulemaking, foster collaboration among state and local government, as well as private partners, and test the safe integration of automated driving systems on our nation's roads.

Some key things that you will hear about with these grants throughout this program, is the maximum amount for these is \$10 million, and the department cannot award more than \$15 million for any given state. We are looking for the duration of these grant programs to be between 1 and 4 years. What that means is, as you submit applications and develop them, you should be thinking through the types of research that is helpful in the development of future rules, standards, or any sort questions that the department will have to be tackling in the coming years. This is going to be a key mechanism that helps inform many of our other programs that are tackling the challenges that we face with developing these technologies.

The NOFO was posted on December 21st, so you will have to turn in your application by March 21st. We have no reason to believe that the application deadline would be extended. And of course if it goes to the process based on the number we get and the complexity we would intend to award in these spring but that actual award date is to be determined.

Three key things that you are going to hear emphasized throughout this is. First and foremost we want to keep safety first in these demonstrations. They are true safety testing of these systems our nation's roadways.

Secondly, you will hear us emphasizing that we need to get the data that is vital to the US Department of Transportation to do the safety analysis to prove the safety. To think through future standards and rulemaking that can enable these to development. That is what we are looking for and that is what we hope to receive in these application.

Lastly, and this is something that I know the Secretary emphasizes strongly, is working with our partners, our state and local governments, our private partners, our first responders, our safety advocates, our disability advocates, all of the people in this ecosystem. A successful grant application will bring them all together as part of a comprehensive package. So that we can get everyone on the same page and we can show what it looks like when these systems and all of these pieces are working well together. She wants to gather the collective expertise, ingenuity and knowledge of multiple stakeholders as they come together so that some partners are greater than their individual components.

With that I will turn it over. We are very excited about these programs, we are excited for what they mean in the future development of these technologies, and excited to work with you all going forward.

Thank you, up next I would like to invite Sujeesh Kurup. He is the Transportation-Policy Specialist at the office of Secretary of Transportation Policy.

Thank you, Mohammed. Listening participants please note the webinar Q&A chat box, the name organization box, and video will be posted and made publicly available on the public grants website shortly after this webinar. Questions posted in the chat box may be answered during the webinar or may be answered after the webinar. Questions relevant to the NOFO that are answered after the webinar, will be posted on the public grant website. If your organization would like to voluntarily share their contact information with other webinar participants, you may choose to provide your organization's name, relevant contact information, and a brief description of your organization in the name organization box.

Let's just go over the whole overview of the Automated Demonstration Grant program. Public law 115-141 appropriates funding for highly automated vehicle research and development program to fund demonstration grants. This public law appropriates \$60 million to be used for demonstration grants that test the safe integration of highly automated vehicles. Also known as automated driving systems, ADS, into our nation's auto transportation system. As specified in the previous statement, the award ceiling up to \$10 million per project. Award is capped at up to \$15 million per state.

Eligible entities are state and local governments, tribal governments, transit agencies and authorities. Metropolitan planning organizations, other subdivisions of state or local governments, including public port authorities or districts, public academic institutions, public research institutions, or a multi-jurisdictional group. What we mean by multi-jurisdictional group is that it's a combination of eligible applicants comprised of at least two members. Each of them is an eligible applicant but one applicant must be identified as the lead applicant and each serve as a prime awardee in the event that an award is made.

Private companies and private universities are not eligible applicants. However, private companies and private universities may be sub-recipients or subcontractors to an awardee. Additionally, we

increased our eligible entities to take a close look at the program goals, explained on page 5 of the NOFO.

The three program goals are; safety, data for safety analysis and rulemaking, and collaboration. In addition, we also want to encourage our eligible entities to pay a close look at the program focus areas explained on page 6 of the NOFO.

There are seven program focus areas, Mohammed will be going over these program focus areas in detail. I would like to go over them at a high-level to emphasize the importance of these 7 program focus areas.

Number 1: Significant public benefit

Number 2: Addressing market failure and other compelling public needs

Number 3: Economic vitality

When we say economic vitality, what we mean is that you want to ensure that these federal funds support the US industrial base through Buy America and other requirements. Encouraging executive order 13788, proposed projects must support economic vitality at the national and regional level. Including advancing domestic industry and promoting domestic development of informational property.

Number 4: Complexity of technology

When we say complexity of technology we mean collections of projects that demonstrate automation, with a preference for demonstrating SAE level 3 or greater automation technologies.

Number 5: Diversity of projects

Number 6: Transportation challenged population

You want to fund projects that test applications, with the greatest potential to serve population, including older adults and individuals with disabilities.

Finally, Number 7: Prototypes

You want to fund projects that include technologies that are at minimum in a limited prototype state, suitable to support state demonstration, but do not need to be ready for broader deployment. Demonstrations must meet applicable all safety standards, or have a detailed approach on how the grantee applies for any necessary redemptions.

Finally, the estimated timeline, as you are aware, the NOFO was issued on December 21st, 2018. Applications are due on March 21st, 2019 by 8PM Eastern time through grants.gov. Estimated announcement for the selected award is Spring 2019.

Thank you, back to Mohammed.

Thank you, Sujeesh. This is part of my presentation, I will go over some of the key priorities and requirements of the ADS demonstration grant NOFO. You have heard from Sujeesh about the program goals, and the key program goals being safety data analysis and collaboration. To break this down some more under safety. The idea is to test the safe integration of ADS into the nations on road transportation system. Fund projects that demonstrate how challenges to safe integration of ADS into the nations on road of transportation systems can be addressed. Under the data for safety analysis, it is critical in showing significant data gathering and sharing of project data with the US DOT and the public throughout the project, in near real time. Either by streaming or periodic

batch updates, and demonstrates significant commitment to leveraging the demonstration data and results in innovative ways. The idea is to fund demonstrations that provide data and information to identify risks, opportunities, and insights relevant to the US DOT safety and rulemaking priorities needed to remove governmental barriers to the safe integration of ADS technologies.

You will hear from Ariel Gold later on some of the data aspects.

Coming back to the collaboration piece. Create a collaboration environment that harness the collective expertise, ingenuity, and knowledge of multiple stakeholders. These projects must include early and consistent stakeholder engagement, including early coordination with law enforcement, local public agencies, industry, transportation challenge populations, the public, and other relevant stakeholders as applicable to conduct these demonstrations on terms that work for all parties.

Now coming back to the focus areas. Again, this is something that Sujeesh touched on. To go back to those gain, in terms of the seven key area.

The first thing is, significant public benefits on the select number of large scale project that result in a significant benefit or benefits to the public.

Addressing market failure and other compelling public needs. Fund projects where industry lacks adequate incentives to participate. This includes areas where cost and complexity are too significant for any single private sector entity, such as cybersecurity. Or where a lack of private sector investment have not proven sufficient to support a particular group, such as access for individuals with disabilities.

On economic vitality - ensuring that this fund supports the US industry base through Buy American and other requirements. Recognizing executive order 13788 proposed projects must support economic vitality at the national and regional level including advancing domestic industry and promoting domestic development of intellectual property.

Under complexity of technology, which is number 4. fund a collection of projects that demonstrate automation with a preference for demonstrating level 3 or greater automation technologies.

Diversity of projects from the collection of projects that serve a variety of communities, including urban, suburban and rural environments and that serve a variety of transportation markets including freight, personal mobility, and public transportation.

Item six, funding projects that test applications with the greatest potential to service transportation-challenged populations, including older adults and individuals with disabilities. As applicable for such populations, projects may focus on entry, egress, and options to make transfer easy, which may include designs for ADS for accessibility, usability, and safety, including securement and restraint systems for wheelchairs and other equipment for people with disabilities.

Under prototypes, Sujeesh mentioned giving the focus on demonstrations, funding projects that include the technologies that are, at a minimum, in limited prototype state suitable to support safe demonstrations but do not need to be ready for broader deployment. The demonstration must meet all applicable safety standards, or have a detailed approach concerning how the grantee intends to apply for any necessary exemptions.

Moving onto the demonstration requirement. Each demonstration must focus on the research and development of automation and ADS technology, per the Society of Automotive Engineer's definitions, with a preference for demonstrating again, as mentioned early, level 3 or greater

automation technologies. Each demonstration must include a physical demonstration. Modeling and simulation may be included activities, however a physical demonstration is a must. Each demonstration must include the gathering and sharing of all relevant and required data with the US DOT throughout the project, in near real time. The recipient must ensure the appropriate data are accessible to the US DOT and/or the public for a minimum of 5 years after the award period of performance expires.

Next slide gets into some more of the requirement details. Each demonstration must include input/output user interfaces on the ADS and related applications that are accessible that allow users varied abilities to input a new destination or communicate route information and to access information generated by the ADS.

Each demonstration must address how the demonstration can be scaled to be applicable across the nation to similar types of road environments and include an outreach task, to share demonstration status, results, and lessons learned with other jurisdictions and the public, in furtherance of technical exchange and knowledge transfer.

Lastly, I want to spend a moment on the eligible work areas. These include technologies associated with ADS. Advanced communication systems supporting safety and/or mobility, including vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-infrastructure interoperable communications that benefit the ADS integration. Innovative mobility solutions that involve deployment of automated vehicles. ADS that enhances safety and mobility for older adults and travelers with disabilities. The demonstration of shared interoperable fleet of automated vehicles. The demonstration and validation of exchanges of data that can support the potentially accelerate the safe, efficient, and secure interoperable integration of ADS. You will hear more on this from Ariel later. This demonstrations may occur on proving grounds, test tracks, port terminals, and campuses or on public roads.

With that I would like to welcome Ariel Gold, Data Program Manager at the ITS Joint Program Office.

Thank you, Mohammed.

Hi everybody, I am going to take a few minutes clarifying the US DOT's data management objectives. And specifically the approach to managing controlled access data, we hope will be produced with the ADS demo program.

So first, I want to step back for a moment to talk about why we care about data so much, and what our objectives are for data management.

First of all, we want to make sure that authorized analysts across all of the US DOT modes have timely and consistent access to data from all the ADS demo projects. This will enable the department to answer questions we have today and in the future. We want to note that we expect these data may contain confidential business information, and/or personally identifiable information, if that is necessary to support project objectives. Therefore, we expect that this type of data will be managed within a controlled access, data system. But a controlled access data system that allows the collaboration to look at data across projects, and to do the work we need to do. So that is one objective.

Secondly, we want to make sure that the public has timely and consistent access to a subset of data from all of the ADS demo projects. If not all data, but a subset. That is to enable third-party research and application development. To further the return on investment from this program. The

data provided to the public should contain no confidential business information and no PPI information. And it may be managed within one or more public facing data systems. What's very important and Sarah will revisit this in the list of parts of your proposals, is the data management plan. You will be required to submit a draft data management plan as part of the application and a more complete data management plan will be a required deliverable within 60 days after the effective date of award. The data management plan will describe types of data, the users of the data, and where the data will be managed and accessed. So that is key to your pulling together your story as how you will need these US DOT objectives for data management in your application.

Next, I am going to spend a few minutes talking more about the controlled access collaborative data system. So you can understand our intent, and to put together well-informed proposal. We say that the US DOT may make available a secure data system to store data for evaluation. The US DOT has developed a secure data commons which we already used to store and analyze data from our partnership with Waze and evaluation data from the connected vehicle pilot program. With more projects and data sets on boarding soon. This system is one of several options for storing data from the ADS demo projects or evaluations, and analysis. We want applicants to consider this and other options when putting together your proposal.

If you designate a third-party system, where US DOT analysts can conduct their work. It is incumbent upon you to describe how the system will enable controlled access and collaboration, at least equal to US DOT's secure data commons. This provides a benchmark so everybody has multiple playing fields. The referenced website, its.dot.gov/data/secure provides more information on the secure data commons. Its capabilities, data set, access controls, cost and more. You will want to particularly visit the data provider tab as it is relevant for applicants, but you may find useful information elsewhere on the site.

Finally, I want to talk about budget. Applicants should budget for the cost of data storage and sharing as appropriate. So that the US DOT can understand the cost and benefits of different data management approaches.

US DOT will use the information you provide in your application to determine where controlled access data will be managed.

The deciding factors will include cost, functionality, and the willingness of applicants to provide data. Please note that the cost of data storage and sharing needs to be part of the proposed budget of individual proposals, regardless of where you propose during the data as articulated in your draft data management plan. And these costs count towards the award value.

So with that I am going to hand it back to Mohammed, to continue the presentations.

Thank you, Ariel. With that we would like to invite Sarah Tarpgaard. She is the contracting agreement officer with the Federal Highway Administration. Welcome.

Thank you, Mohammed.

Hello, this is Sarah Tarpgaard. As Mohammed said I will go over the application process, review and selection of grant awardees, and some grant administration information. As a reminder, this webinar recording as well as the Q&A chat box will be posted online, shortly after the webinar at the transportation.gov/av/grants site. And questions that are not answered here on-site during the webinar will be put into a Q&A document, which will then also be posted online at the AV grant website as well as the grant.gov website links to the NOFO. Finally, as a reminder, if you would like

to voluntarily share your name, your organization, and contact information. Feel free to go ahead and put your information in the name, organization box on the left-hand side [of the screen].

I saw a couple of questions come in when eligibility was being discussed. So I will go ahead and address those before we go onto my slides.

On the eligibility, it is private nonprofits, private companies and universities are not eligible to be the prime awardee. They are of course eligible to be sub-awardees, sub-contractors, and team members. The eligibility requirement as stated in NOFO, makes it clear that the prime applicant has to be a public organization.

I also saw the question, is it okay for a sub to be part of multiple application teams? The answer is yes, it is okay from the USDOT side. That is an item that organizations have to work out amongst each other as they make teams.

Those are some quick answers to some questions I saw.

Moving on.

On my slide, this NOFO posted on grants.gov. Any amendments to this NOFO or Q&A will also be posted on grants.gov. It is up to the applicants to continue to monitor that NOFO posting on grants.gov. Your application has to be submitted through the grants.gov system. If you're having any trouble with using the system, please note that they have a very robust set of training resources, and they also have a grants.gov center helpdesk. I am not the expert in grants.gov, I am a user just like you applicants, so please don't come to me with system questions. Rather please use the grants.gov support center and online training resources for further assistance.

One thing about grants.gov please register early as a potential applicant on the grants.gov if not already registered. It can take 2 to 4 weeks for the process to complete itself, including obtaining a DUNS number and some other steps that applicants have to go through to be fully registered on the site, and able to submit an application. Check to make sure your registration is active, and able to submit your application when you are ready to do so.

One thing to note on the NOFO page 29, late applications won't be accepted. Only applicants who comply with the submission deadline, and submit through grants.gov will be eligible for award. If you have a reported system technical issue, and it cannot be validated, your application will be rejected. If you look at the text on page 29, there is a process and a very clear requirement for if you are having a system technical problem, you need to get a grants.gov helpdesk ticket tracking number, etc. So they can verify your system problems occurred prior to the deadline for application deadline. I wanted to point that out that is an important thing to read in advance and to be aware of.

Also, incomplete applications. Page 30 of the NOFO, states that the US DOT expects applications to be fully completed upon submission, and we reserve the right to reject incomplete applications. So please be sure and check the directions in the NOFO and submit a complete application. Otherwise your application may be rejected and not considered.

The content of the application is spelled out in the NOFO. It consists of six different parts that are on the slide. Please note, that the US DOT does intend to release part one online after awardees are announced. That is the part one project narrative and technical approach. That has a 25 page max and that will be shared publicly after selections have been made, in the interest of sharing information.

In addition, shortly after the closing/ application submittal, we also intend to share the names of all eligible applicants received. Those are two things, as you submit your application, you are acknowledging and accepting the US DOTs intent to publicize those items.

On page 14 in the NOFO, note the page count of each part. Part one and part two do have 25 page maximums. Parts three through six have no limit to page count. If you submit more than a 25 page maximum, the pages will be taken away and not distributed for evaluation. Also note, page 14 in the NOFO has format instructions regarding margins and fonts and directions on naming your electronic file. Please be sure to check that information.

Page 15 of the NOFO has instructions for file types and numbers of files to submit.

Going into the actual six parts of the application.

Part one is your project narrative and technical approach. You have two main areas. The introduction does not count against the 25 page limit. The introduction consists of a cover page, cover letter, and there's a summary table that should be in the NOFO that we ask you to fill out as a part of your introduction. And you can also include the table of contents with your figures and tables. That's your introduction.

The second part is your project narrative and technical approach. In the NOFO on page 17 these are the items listed; executive summary goals, focus areas, requirements, and approach. The NOFO contains a narrative to help describe each of those sections. You should include that as your part one. We want to emphasize that the NOFO asks to explain how your demonstration aligns with goals, and how your demonstration aligns with focus areas. Be sure to describe in your application the how. Don't just repeat the NOFO text and be vague. Be clear and specific, and describe how. That is what the reviewers are looking for.

The second part is your management approach, staffing approach and capabilities. This also has a 25 page maximum, except for resumes, they are excluded from that page count. Resumes of key personnel should be provided. They do not account toward page count, but it should not exceed two pages each.

Part three of your application as Ariel mentioned is the draft data management plan. And that NOFO has a description of what you are to include in that plan. And that is on page 19 of the NOFO.

Part four of your application is letters of commitment. We encourage you to submit letters of commitment from your team numbers, key stakeholders, etc. But we ask that the letters of commitment be put into one file, scanned together, with a table of contents upfront. This has no page limit and is not intended for public release. Please note these letters of commitment need to be a part of the application submittal. Any letters submitted separately or submitted late, will not be taken under consideration. As I said they be submitted altogether as one file with the table of contents.

The part five of your application is standard forms. There's a standard form 424, that is a cover page for grant applications. As well as a self-explanatory list of organizational information that is requested in your part five.

Application part six, this is your budget. Basically, no page limit, and it's not for public release. There are four major sections of your budget as spelled out in your NOFO page 22. The general budget is asking for your bottom-line amounts. Federal funding request is by year and end total. Any cost share requested by year and end total. This is a summary level budget table.

The next section of your part six is the detailed budget, by year and end total. This is where we ask for you to delineate individual cost elements such as; direct labor, travel, equipment, slides, subcontract, consultants, etc. Please add budget footnotes and narratives to explain the proposed cost. This is your chance to include the numbers, but you need to also explain and support the numbers with footnotes, narratives, whatever format you choose to do so. These tables in your budget should always include federal share, and if you are proposing cost share, include the cost share as well. Both of those parts make up the total project cost. Your cost share should be detailed to the same degree that you're proposed federal share.

The last two parts of the budget detail, for the budget application part six are tables that we provide in the NOFO, page 24 and 25. Where we ask you to please follow our format to fill in your summary budget information for our review.

Now the selection criteria, how will we evaluate and make selections for award? The NOFO page 32, lists the selection criteria and we've included them on the slide. There's technical merit criteria, goals, focus areas, requirements, approach and capabilities. And this is the degree that your proposed demonstration aligns with the goals, focus areas and requirements stated earlier in the NOFO and discussed earlier during this webinar. If you'll notice the technical application very much follows these items; goals, focus areas, requirements, approach and capabilities. So there is an alignment between your technical application and the technical merit criteria used to evaluate your application.

Cost will be reviewed but is not considered a rated or scored factor. We will evaluate cost for reasonableness and conformance to grant regulations.

Application review and selection process. The review process consists of individual reviewers across the US DOT. With the necessary expertise in subject area, reviewing applications and convening as a panel to discuss and come up with a consensus evaluation regarding each application. The technical panel reviewers then briefs Senior Management. Senior Management reviews the evaluation information and then will provide recommendations to the Secretary of Transportation. Under this NOFO the Secretary is the selection official. The selection is based on those technical merit criteria that were listed on the previous slide, as well as the cost review.

In addition, prior to making an award, the US DOT does an applicant risk assessment, which is a financial stability past performance audit review, similar to a responsibility determination.

In addition to the technical merit criteria and the cost review, you see the last two bullets on this slide. The Secretary will also consider for award, the collection of projects. Meaning that the nature of the collection of awards combined. The goal is to have them as a whole serve a variety of communities, including urban, suburban, and rural environments. And serve of variety of transportation markets including freight, personal mobility, and public transportation. Also the Secretary will prioritize projects that test applications with the greatest potential to serve transportation challenged populations, including older adults and individuals with disabilities.

The type of awards that will be made are grants that are cost reimbursements. Funding is available until expended. And future NOFOs may be issued as needed to distribute any funds that are not awarded in this round. The purely performance of awards will vary based on the demonstration proposed, as we state in the NOFO. It's anticipated that they range between 1 and 4 years. But applicants should propose their own period of performance specific to your demonstration.

As was mentioned earlier, there is a joint explanatory statement. Does include that award ceiling for each project is \$10 million. At that the accumulative amount of awards that goes to a particular state, shall not exceed \$15 million in total.

One thing I wanted to point out on page 36 of the NOFO. After the evaluation and applicants are selected. Please note that announcement of selection does not constitute approval of the application as it's already been submitted. Rather before award, the US DOT may contact the applicant to discuss specific details of for example the budget proposal or initiate negotiations of a project specific agreement, if necessary. If those negotiations do not result in an acceptable submittal, the US DOT does reserve the right to terminate the negotiation and decline to fund the applicant. Those discussions, negotiations, detail of budget may occur after announcement of a selected applicant.

NOFO page 36 lists the grant regulations. Those award terms and conditions that will end up in the resulting grant award. So you can take a look at those.

Cost sharing or matching. Just to highlight, that under this NOFO, cost sharing is not required, but it is encouraged. If you choose to propose a cost share, it will be evaluated as a part of a cost and budget review. We will assess what is considered beneficial, and feasible and furthers the goals of this program. Cost share will be considered beneficial to break ties among applications with equivalent ratings after the evaluation of other factors. If you do propose cost share and it is accepted, please note that that cost share will be formally included in the award. That amount will be binding for the grantee, to satisfy that cost share that's in the award. Cost share has to be allowable in accordance with the grant regulation, which is listed in NOFO 2CRF-200.

A couple of things before I close. To highlight on page 30 of the NOFO, the US DOT will not reimburse any pre-award costs or application separation costs.

We provided a contact information on this slide. That is an email that was set up just for questions and inquiries regarding this NOFO. So please feel free to submit your questions in writing. As needed, I will prepare and we will publish Q&A to capture information that should be shared with all, resulting from questions submitted. As I mentioned, those Q&A will be submitted at grants.gov under this NOFO number.

As a reminder, register at grants.gov early, just to be safe. And one caveat, if there are any conflicts between any statements made during this webinar and the actual written NOFO, please be aware that the written NOFO prevails as the correct information.

With that I will turn it back over to Mohammed.

Thank you, Sarah.

We are seeing your questions come in. We encourage you to continue putting your questions in the chat box. We have received your questions, and we will try to answer them to the best of our abilities here. Knowing that we don't have all of our partners other experts due to the shutdown.

Some of the questions that we have received, this one is from Jonathan Corey: *"Will this be limited to automobiles, or can other ADS systems in the right of way apply?"*

Sujeesh would you like to take that?

We are specifically focusing on automobiles, but the right of way we are not clear what you mean by that. Can you send us an explanation of what it is you mean by that. That would help us answer that question a little more.

We have another question from Tahmina Amin-Nawabi: *"Are there any possibilities of using this funding for connected infrastructure such as connected traffic lights?"*

You are strictly using these funds for automated driving systems which are greater, but if part of the demonstration is to show some kind of connected infrastructure that's perfectly fine. But primarily you are focused on automated driving system demonstrations.

Rosanne Sosa: *"Information sharing to the public is a must, what about demonstrating technology related IP?"*

We are not seeking any IP, we are looking at the demonstration performance data.

LA Metro has a question on: *"Can you explain how this requirement applies to fixed route bus transit?"*

The question had to do with accessible inclusive technology.

So the questions says, *"Each demonstration must include input/output user interfaces on the ADS and related applications that are accessible and allow users with varied abilities to input a new destination or communicate route information."*

So the idea is to design a system even including a bus transit route. To have the ability for any traveler to access the system. Such as a display, they can communicate not only with the user but it's connected to the transportation system. So think of the user being someone with a vision, hearing, cognitive or physical disability. Make it as inclusive as possible so he has a complete trip experience, not just experience dealing with the ADS-the automated driving systems. So he gets a new route or to talk with providers or his caregivers.

Sujeesh, you want to take the next question from Caleb Winter from Oregon Metro?
Yes, the questions was, *"Can ADS be used on rail? If no, can ADS be used at intersections with rail crossings where some of the investment is communication between road and rail vehicles and related operations?"*

No. We're strictly on roads. However if the road intersects with rail crossing, we will definitely consider that. That is one of the things that we are concerned about, the safety of rail crossings

So the next one, *"Will the US DOT be entertaining an extension to the grant submission deadline?"*

As of right now, no. We do not see any need to change it provided that it's fully running.

So the next one from Bennett, Sarah do you want to answer that one on proposal evaluation?

"In evaluating submission will USDOT consider geographic diversity among grant recipients, including the need for a balance in addressing the needs of urban and rural areas?"

Yes, that was one of the points in one of my slides if you take a look at the technical criteria. That was one of the points the Secretary will take into account as well.

I think the next one from George Wright is in a similar vein: *"Is there a preference for use cases/locations, whether it's for urban or rural?"*

I don't think there is a preference. We did not state that there was a preference, the criteria is that the secretary will look at the diversity of projects, and diversity of technologies and locations in the selection process.

One from Sanjay Gokhale: *"Does the proposal need to meet one or all seven focus areas?"*

I saw that question that was a good one.

The way the evaluation criteria is set up, if you look at it, they will evaluate the degree that the project aligned with the focus on the goals, which is all three. And the degree that aligns with the focus areas which is all seven.

One from George Wright: *"Is there a preference for expansion of existing programs vs. entirely new programs?"*

I do not think there's any preference.

One from Bob Allston: *"Is there any weighted allocated to the valuation criteria?"*

The NOFO states those technical merit criteria are equally weighted.

So one from LA Metro: *"Can you please repeat the maximum grant award for project and combined total per state?"*

Sure, its \$10 million max on programmed award, and that's federal. The combined total per state, collective of all projects awarded within a state is \$15 million in federal funds.

"Can a state agency submit more than 1 application?"

Yes.

"May a private company participate in multiple proposals? (As sub-contractors/sub recipients)"

Yes, and that's the one that I spoke to before.

"May national laboratories apply?"

Well that depends if they are a public organization or not. I would have to look into that but the requirement is to be a public organization and not a private organization.

"Can a federal agency be a prime applicant?"

I guess if you would send me back question by email to that ADS email account, then we can certainly look into it to make sure. I would like to look into that to check.

"What about non-profit organizations?"

Nonprofit organizations are not eligible to be the prime grantee, but are eligible to be on a team of sub-awardees or sub-contractors.

“Is it required to identify sub-contractors prior to award, or can a DOT follow public bid process?”

You do not have to identify sub-contractors prior to award. If you know who they are and are a part of a team, you certainly can identify them. You would just include them with name, and budget, etc. If it's not known who the sub-contractor will be, you would just indicate the plan, the scope and estimated a dollar amount for example and competitive procurement can occur later.

This next one is from Joel Klavitz: “How often will this funding opportunity become available, will there be annual funding cycles?”

This is a one off award, so this is just the one time. So there is not going to be a cycle of funding. So one and only time.

So another question from Syed Mahmud: “Can one state university collaborate with private company from another state?”

Yes, they can collaborate but the prime applicant needs to be a public organization, a public university, or one of those public kind of organizations, identified in the eligibility clause. A private company can be a part of the team but cannot be the prime applicant.

“Is there a nonfederal match required?”

There is no required non-federal match, but you are encouraged to propose non-federal match for your project if you would like to be considered.

“Is there a limited number of PIs on an application?”

No, there is no limit on the number of PI's.

“Can part-1 have appendices, or will appendices count against the page limit?”

Appendices would count against the page limit.

“Are there any minimum cost share requirements?”

No.

An extension to the submission deadline will allow for better partnerships to be created and more meaningful projects submitted. Would USDOT consider an extension to the submission deadline?

As of right now, no

“Regarding the NOFO page 14 format, is it acceptable for the application text to be formatted in multiple columns?”

Yes.

Some of these questions are related to data management.

Christopher says, *“Will the USDOT require that selected entities sign a specific data sharing agreement? Our experience with AV vendors is that they are hesitant to share certain data.”*

So the simplest way to answer this is, we will have a sharing agreement with the awardees, potentially before awards. Based on what you have proposed, providing and under what terms. Please do be aware that is a part of the plan. We will provide more information as needed.

So the next question from Dave LeBlanc: "US DOT will use the info received to determine where controlled-access data will be managed. Does this mean that a team proposing its own system may be denied, and required to use the USDOT's? Then should both approaches be budgeted?"

This is a good question, I think we are going to have to come back with clarity on whether you need to propose both of those approaches. We will note that one thing that we did provide on the website is cost estimate information, so you can estimate the cost.

And if it is going to go to the next question.

Katie: *"If the US DOT secure data system be used does this need to be included in the budget?"*

The answer is yes. Regardless of the system is used, does this need to be included in the budget? Yes, regardless of what system is, you do need to estimate the cost and put it into your budget. We provide tools for you to be able to estimate that, which hopefully can also help you with your assessment. We will try to provide more clarity on the second question from Dave LaBlanc.

We have a logistical question.

Asking, *"What is the address of the presentation where it can be accessed?"*

The presentation are going to be posted on the [transportation.gov/AV/grants](https://www.transportation.gov/AV/grants) website.

Michael has another similar question.

"Will we get access to a list of everyone that provided contact information?"

The answer is yes. Again this information will be posted, at the same URL. Which is [tranporation.gov/AV/grants](https://www.transportation.gov/AV/grants).

We have another quick question for Ariel from Jeff Rupp, to clarify near real time, what does it mean?

Sure, so what this means is that that data has been made available, as soon as it is possible to make it available. Depending on the nature of the data, the nature of the need, and any privacy protections, or processes that need to be applied. That could be streaming so true, real time. Or a periodic upload of a frequency that could be minutes, days, weeks or months. We need you to provide to us in your draft data management plan, to the best of your ability, that type of information. This will be a collaborative process, so this award will settle on what this means for individual use cases. Again, our intent is that we get the data as close as the time of generation as is appropriate for the use of the data. And any processes that need to be applied on your end to make it suitable to provide access.

There's a question from Levant Guvenc: *"Will you only fund large demonstration projects? Will you also consider smaller budget smaller scale deployments?"*

We are actually looking only at large scale demonstration projects, as mentioned during the previous presentation.

So LA Metro: *“With non-federal cost share not required and not among the selection criteria, Can you please clarify if applications proposing a non-federal match would be more competitive?”*

Applicants proposing a non-federal share match will be considered in the selection processing in the event of applications being similar in all ways, a cost share would be considered a benefit in breaking ties.

Next question from Maria Turner: *“Can you confirm that the table text is meant to be double-spaced? This may lead to some lengthy tables, depending on content.”*

I can look at that section again on the format, it says double space. I will double check to make sure. Thanks for bringing that to our attention.

One from Hysain Aziz: *“How many submissions will be allowed from on lead applicant?”*

There is no limit on quality of applications that a lead applicant can submit.

Another one from Roxana Sosa: *“If the award is for one year for performance or budget only 1 year of performance or whole project?”*

Full project, if it will be funded we need to wait and see. It is not a one year and renewal each year, it's considered a whole project over multiple years.

One from LA Metro: *“Do any applicable state legislative authorization and permits for the proposed demonstration need to be secured by the time an application for ADS funding is submitted? What are the deadlines for obligating the grant and starting the physical demonstration?”*

I think that might be something that you can submit in writing so we can understand it better. The application would need to describe any barriers or needs, or waivers and things like that. It would not need to be secured for the application submittal. But it should describe the intent and need to get any kind of needs or waivers.

One from Maria Turner: *“If applicants uses dividers between application parts, would those count against page limit in part 1 and 2?”*

You will be submitting those as separate files, so there is no need for a divider.”

From Bob Edelstein: *“Just to confirm, applications do not require quantities economic justification (BCA)?”*

No.

One from Kohinoor Kar: *“State DOTs typically follow federal procurement rules regarding “competitive” selection process when hiring consultants. If the team consists of experts from eligible public/ private orgs who can deliver the project, do the procurement rules for complete process apply again or would you approve the team to process with the project?”*

If you have identified subs and team members in the application, you still have to be subject to procurement standards in the grant regulation, but there are means within those procurement standards to identify team members from the beginning. The grant regulation on the section of procurement standard does apply.

We have a few other questions that came in moments ago.

“Is the US DOT also interested in including educational and training activities for ADS technologies as a part of the application?”

Mainly we are looking for actual demonstration, we are actually looking for physical demonstration automation and the preference is level 3 or greater.

Chad is asking: “What will the longer term commitment for the project if approved? Will funding be available on a cost share basis to maintain infrastructure?”

No, the intent is for this to be demonstration project only.

Madhur has another question: *“Is there any specific documentation to be submitted to prove safety compliance for public demonstrations?”*

What does that mean?

I am not sure how to answer that. Maybe you can submit that question in writing with more information, and we will be happy to look into it. The application needs to include the information specified in the NOFO with the six parts. As long as you follow that, that should make it compliant for review.

There is another question, *“Is a continuation of the claimant of a technology that is previously funded by another grant eligible for this project?”*

Can you repeat that?

“Is a continuation or deployment of a technology that is previously funded by another grant eligible for this project?”

We need to understand more of the question. If there have been federal funds, they cannot be used toward cost share, unless there is authority to do so.

This is a standalone NOFO with its own set of criteria.

Marissa has another question: *“Will your responses to these questions be part of the online posting of the questions?”*

The answer is yes. Any questions submitted via email.

If we have verbally answered them now, they will be a part of the recording. But if there are questions that we were unable to answer here and questions submitted to the email address, we will put together a written document and send it to the email addresses.

The last question from Ruben, *“How are individual projects versus system of projects differentiated? In terms of separating applications?”*

I think that is one of those questions that we need to answer by email. So if Ruben can send us an email with that question and go into more detail, explaining what you mean. That will help us answer it.

We have more questions that just came in.

For some of the other questions that are posted in the chat box, or any that will come to the email, As I said we will answer those I will post them back on the URL. [Transportation.gov/av/grants](https://www.transportation.gov/av/grants)

We would like to thank you for your time.

We look forward to your proposals.

We will say goodbye now.

Thank you.

[Event Concluded]