RAIL

MOVING AMERICA FORWARD

FY21 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Grants NOFO Webinar

Presented by:

Doug Gascon • Matt Lorah • Judah Lynam • Andréa Martin

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Welcome:
FRA Deputy Administrator Amit Bose

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Agenda

① FY21 CRISI Program Overview

② NOFO Overview and How to Apply

③ Best Practices

- Project Narrative

- Statement of Work (SOW)

- Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA)

- Environmental Readiness

④ Recap & Reminders

⑤ Q & A

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

FY21 CRISI
Program Overview

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

FY21 CRISI – Program Overview

Grant Purpose

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

CRISI – Recent & Upcoming Funding Opportunities

Authorization & Appropriations (M)

	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21
Authorization	$230	$255	$330	$330
Appropriation	$592.5	$255	$325	$375

Status of Funding Opportunities

Year	Available Funding (M)		Status
FY18 (PTC)	$250	☑	Awards announced August and December 2018
FY18	$318	☑	Awards announced June 2019
FY19	$244	☑	Awards announced March 12, 2020
FY20	$311	☑	Awards announced September 23, 2020
FY21	$362	☐	Awards expected spring 2022

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

FY21 CRISI – Program Overview

Eligible Applicants

- A State or group of States

- An Interstate Compact

- Public agencies or publicly chartered authorities

- Local governments

- Amtrak or other intercity passenger rail carrier

- Class II or III railroads

- Any rail carrier or equipment manufacturer in partnership with at least one state entity, public agency, and/or local government

- The Transportation Research Board (TRB) together with any entity with which it contracts in the development of rail-related research, including cooperative research programs

- A university transportation center engaged in rail-related research

- A non-profit labor organization representing a class or craft of employees of rail carriers or rail carrier contractors

Eligible Project Criteria

- **Wide Range of Rail Capital Projects**
  - Congestion mitigation
  - Ridership growth facilitation
  - Enhancements to multimodal connections
  - Improvements to short-line or regional railroad infrastructure
- **Railroad Safety Technology**
- **Track, Station, and Equipment Improvements for Intercity Passenger Rail**
- **Grade Crossing Improvements**
- **Rail Line Relocation and Improvement**
- **Regional and Corridor Service Planning and corresponding Environmental Analyses**

- **Safety Programs and Institutes**
- **Research**
- **Workforce Development and Training**

At least 25% of funds is reserved for rural projects

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

FY21 CRISI – New Set-Asides and Non-CRISI Funding

$75M

Set-aside for capital projects to support new intercity passenger rail service routes including alignments for existing routes

$25M

Set-aside for capital and engineering solutions targeting trespassing

$2.3M

Non-CRISI funding to reduce trespassing

Other available funding for trespassing mitigation projects has been folded into the CRISI Grant Program under Track 4

iv. Track 4—Research, Safety Programs and Institutes (Non-Railroad Infrastructure). Track 4 consists of projects not falling within Tracks 1-3, including workforce development activities, research, safety programs or institutes designed to improve rail safety that clearly demonstrate the expected positive impact on rail safety. Sufficient detail must be provided on what the project will accomplish, as well as the applicant's capability to achieve the proposed outcomes. Examples include initiatives for improving rail safety, training, payment of applicable law enforcement wages to undertake trespass Enforcement Activities, Outreach Campaigns for reducing suicides that involve railroad trespassing, and education.

FY21 CRISI – Funding for Trespassing Projects

CRISI Funding	*CRISI Set-Aside: $25M*	• For capital projects and engineering solutions targeting trespassing • Preference for projects located in counties with the most pedestrian casualties as identified in [FRA's National Strategy to Prevent Trespassing on Railroad Property](#)
Non-CRISI Funding	**Railroad Trespassing Enforcement Grant Program: $2,034,296**	• For railroad trespassing enforcement activities at trespassing hot spots **on FRA-regulated track** • Limited to hourly wages for law enforcement officials • Maximum award is $120,000
	Railroad Trespassing Suicide Prevention Grant Program: $207,000	• For the implementation or expansion of targeted outreach campaigns to reduce the number of railroad-related suicides that involve railroad trespassing **on FRA-regulated track** • Maximum award is $100,000
	For Non-CRISI funding: • *Applicants must meet CRISI eligibility requirements* • *Federal share of total project costs can be up to 100 percent* • *Submit under Track 4*	

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Non-Federal Match Requirements

- Federal share of total costs **shall not exceed 80 percent.**

- 20 percent minimum non-Federal match for CRISI-funded projects may consist of public sector (e.g., state or local) and/or private sector funding. FRA will not consider any Federal financial assistance nor any non-Federal funds already expended (or otherwise encumbered) toward the matching requirement, unless compliant with 2 CFR part 200.

- Applicants must identify the source(s) of its matching and other funds, and must clearly and distinctly reflect these funds as part of the total project cost.

- In-kind contributions, including the donation of services, materials, and equipment, may be credited as a project cost, in a uniform manner consistent with 2 CFR 200.306.

Average matching percent of selected projects for FY20: 49%

Average matching percent over lifetime of program (FY17-20): 49%

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

FY21 CRISI – Program Overview

Evaluation Criteria

- **Technical Merit:** SOW aligns with expected outcomes, project readiness, technical qualifications and capacity of applicant to carry out proposed project, innovative overall approach, private sector participation, consistency with planning documents

- **Project Benefits:** Effects on system performance, safety, integration with other modes, ability to meet demand

Selection Criteria

- **Preference:**
  - Federal share of total project costs is 50 percent or less
  - Maximized net benefits
  - Pre-construction elements (preliminary engineering [PE], final design [FD]) that support development of new intercity passenger rail routes
  - Projects targeting trespassing in areas with documented casualties

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Key Departmental Objectives

DOT will assess the project's ability to meet one or more of these objectives. Such considerations can include, but are not limited to, the extent to which an application:

Safety
Improves safety at highway-rail grade crossings, reduces incidences of rail-related trespassing, and upgrades infrastructure to achieve a higher level of safety.

Equitable economic strength, improving core assets
Invests in vital infrastructure assets, addresses capital needs to connect farms, factories, and shippers to the rail network, and provides opportunities for families to achieve economic security through rail industry employment.

Resilience, addressing climate change
Reduces emissions, promotes energy efficiency, increases resiliency, and recycles or redevelops existing infrastructure.

Racial equity, economic inclusion
Improves or expands transportation options, mitigates the safety risks and detrimental quality of life effects that rail lines can have on communities, and expands workforce development and training opportunities to foster a more diverse rail industry.

Transformation of our nation's transportation infrastructure
Adds capacity to congested corridors, builds new connections, and ensures assets will be improved to a state of good repair.

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

NOFO Overview & How to Apply

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

What is a NOFO?

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

A **Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO):**

- Announces the grant opportunity

- Contains details about the application requirements and procedures to request Federal funding for eligible projects

What information is in a NOFO?

Key Parts of a NOFO

- Program summary
- Key Dates
- Addresses
- FRA Contact Information
- Table of Contents
  - Program Description
  - Federal Award Information
  - **Eligibility Information**
  - **Application and Submission Information**
  - **Application Review Information**
  - Federal Award Administration Information
  - Federal Awarding Agency Contacts

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

15

Where do I start?

Check the FRA **Discretionary Competitive Grant Program** webpage

- https://railroads.dot.gov/grants-loans/competitive-discretionary-grant-programs/competitive-discretionary-grant-programs

Click the link to access the NOFO

Where is the FY21 CRISI Program NOFO?

NOTE: Application deadline is 5 pm, ET, Monday, November 29, 2021

Where do I find "How to Apply" information?

Search grants on **Grants.gov:**

Click the **Opportunity Number** to see the Synopsis

What is the Synopsis?

Summary information about the grant opportunity in Grants.gov:

How do I Apply?

Key Steps

- Obtain a Dun and Bradstreet number (DUNS)

- **Register early** in the Federal government's System for Award Management (SAM)
  - **NOTE: SAM registration can take up to 2 weeks**

- For Grants.gov, complete an **Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) profile** and create a username and password

- Submit an application addressing all requirements outlined in the NOFO

How do I Apply?

https://railroads.dot.gov/grant-administration/applying-grants/competitive-grants-application-process

What do I include in my application?

Required Documents

- **Project Narrative**

- **Statement of Work**

- **Environmental Compliance Documentation**

- **Benefit-Cost Analysis**

Note: *Under this NOFO, FRA requires that a written agreement exist between the applicant and the railroad regarding use and ownership consistent with 49 U.S.C. 22905(c)(1) for projects using rights-of-way owned by a railroad that is not the applicant.*

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

What forms are required?

Required Forms

- SF424 (Application for Federal Assistance)
  - *Either*: SF 424A or 424C – Budget info for Non-Construction OR Construction
  - *Either*: SF 424B or 424D – Assurances for Non-Construction OR for Construction

- FRA's Additional Assurances and Certifications

- SF LLL: Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, if applicable
  - FRA's Assurances and Certifications covers entities that do not perform lobbying activities

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Where do I find additional information and help?

Find **Additional Information** about the grant opportunity in Grants.gov at the bottom of the Synopsis page:

Application Review and Selection Process

1. Intake and Eligibility

Each application is reviewed for completeness and eligibility to determine which applications move to the evaluation stage

2. Evaluation

Each complete and eligible application is evaluated by a panel of DOT subject matter experts using criteria outlined in the NOFO

3. Selection

Final funding decisions are made by taking into account the evaluation and selection criteria outlined in the NOFO

4. Announcement

FRA press release announces selections approximately 4 to 5 months following application due date

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Best Practices

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Best Practices – Helpful Hints

- Read the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) completely and carefully to understand the criteria for eligibility and selection, and what information each application must include

- FRA has identified three primary areas where applications not selected for funding typically demonstrate deficiencies:

  - Project Narrative

  - Statement of Work (SOW)

  - Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA)

Best Practices — Project Narrative

Best Practices – Project Narrative

Project Narrative Outline

I. Cover Page

II. Project Summary

III. Project Funding

IV. Applicant Eligibility

V. Project Eligibility

VI. Detailed Project Description

VII. Project Location

VIII. Evaluation & Selection Criteria

IX. Project Implementation & Management

X. Environmental Readiness

☑ Structure your project narrative in accordance with the outline specified in the NOFO

☑ Include all elements identified in the outline

☑ Follow the instructions for each element

☑ Adhere to 25-page limit

Project Narrative Outline

I.   Cover Page

II.   Project Summary

III. Project Funding

IV.   Applicant Eligibility

V.   Project Eligibility

VI.   Detailed Project Description

VII. Project Location

VIII. Evaluation & Selection Criteria

IX.   Project Implementation & Management

X.   Environmental Readiness

Include the table as outlined in the NOFO:

☑ Indicate Project Track

☑ Indicate if an application for the project has been submitted previously to another Federal grant program – include the program and year

☑ Rural or non-Rural

☑ Indicate any specific set-aside for which your project is applying, if applicable

Project Title	
Applicant	
Project Track	1,2,3, and/or 4
Was a Federal grant application previously submitted for this project?	Yes/No
If yes, state the name of the Federal grant program and title of the project in the previous application.	Federal Grant Program:
	Project Title:
Is this a Rural Project? What percentage of the project cost is based in a Rural Area?	Yes/No Percentage of total project cost:
Is this a project eligible under 49 U.S.C. 22907(c)(2) that supports the development of new intercity passenger rail service routes including alignments for existing routes?	Yes/No
Is this for a Capital Project or engineering solution targeting trespassing?	Yes/No
Is this for a safety program to reduce trespassing through targeted law Enforcement Activities?	Yes/No
Is this for a safety program to implement or expand an Outreach Campaign for reducing railroad trespassing suicide?	Yes/No
City(ies), State(s) where the project is located	
Urbanized Area where the project is located	
Population of Urbanized Area	
Is the project currently programmed in the: State rail plan, State Freight Plan, TIP, STIP, MPO Long Range Transportation Plan, State Long Range Transportation Plan?	Yes/No (If yes, please specify in which plans the project is currently programmed)

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Best Practices – Project Narrative

Project Narrative Outline

I. Cover Page

II. Project Summary

III. Project Funding

IV. Applicant Eligibility

V. Project Eligibility

VI. Detailed Project Description

VII. Project Location

VIII. Evaluation & Selection Criteria

IX. Project Implementation & Management

X. Environmental Readiness

☑ Briefly describe the project **in 4 to 6 sentences**, its anticipated benefits, and the transportation challenges the project will address

☑ **Think of this section of the application as your elevator pitch for the project to the DOT Secretary and FRA Administrator**

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Best Practices – Project Narrative

Project Narrative Outline

I. Cover Page

II. Project Summary

III. **Project Funding**

IV. Applicant Eligibility

V. Project Eligibility

VI. Detailed Project Description

VII. Project Location

VIII. Evaluation & Selection Criteria

IX. Project Implementation & Management

X. Environmental Readiness

☑ Only include eligible costs

☑ Specify each source of non-Federal match

☑ Provide details about in-kind match

☑ Indicate public- vs. private-sector match

☑ Describe the non-Federal funding arrangements

☑ Attach funding commitment letters

☑ Identify if the proposed match will not be available until a certain date or if funds must be spent by a deadline

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Best Practices – Project Narrative

Project Narrative Outline

I. Cover Page

II. Project Summary

III. Project Funding

IV. Applicant Eligibility

V. Project Eligibility

VI. Detailed Project Description

VII. Project Location

VIII. Evaluation & Selection Criteria

IX. Project Implementation & Management

X. Environmental Readiness

☑ Thoroughly discuss the transportation challenges and benefits

☑ Include data to support project benefits

☑ Describe how project components are related and will be sequenced

☑ Include photographs or diagrams

☑ Identify all host railroads, operators, and beneficiaries

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Best Practices – Project Narrative

Project Narrative Outline

I.   Cover Page

II.   Project Summary

III.   Project Funding

IV.   Applicant Eligibility

V.   Project Eligibility

VI.   Detailed Project Description

VII.   Project Location

VIII.   Evaluation & Selection Criteria

IX.   Project Implementation & Management

X.   Environmental Readiness

☑ Identify cities, counties, and states where project is located

☑ Include a map of the project, as well as geospatial data

☑ Identify railroad mileposts

☑ For grade crossing projects, include the U.S. DOT National Highway-Rail Crossing Inventory number

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Best Practices – Project Narrative

Project Narrative Outline

I.   Cover Page

II.   Project Summary

III.   Project Funding

IV.   Applicant Eligibility

V.   Project Eligibility

VI.   Detailed Project Description

VII.   Project Location

VIII. Evaluation & Selection Criteria

IX.   Project Implementation & Management

X.   Environmental Readiness

☑ Include a separate section in the project narrative focused on how the project meets each of the evaluation and selection criteria

☑ ***DO NOT*** rely solely on the contents of the "detailed project description" section to satisfy this requirement — it is OK to repeat key points in this section

☑ Quantify benefits whenever possible

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Best Practices – Project Narrative

Project Narrative Outline

I.   Cover Page

II.   Project Summary

III. Project Funding

IV.   Applicant Eligibility

V.   Project Eligibility

VI.   Detailed Project Description

VII. Project Location

VIII. Evaluation & Selection Criteria

IX.   **Project Implementation & Management**

X.   Environmental Readiness

☑ Highlight applicant's past experiences managing and overseeing similar projects, including FRA- or DOT-funded projects

☑ Describe expected arrangements for project contracting, contract oversight, change-order management, risk management, and conformance with Federal requirements for progress reporting

Best Practices – Project Narrative

Project Narrative Outline

I. Cover Page

II. Project Summary

III. Project Funding

IV. Applicant Eligibility

V. Project Eligibility

VI. Detailed Project Description

VII. Project Location

VIII. Evaluation & Selection Criteria

IX. Project Implementation & Management

X. Environmental Readiness

☑ Document environmental work, either initiated or completed

☑ Planning Readiness for Tracks 2 and 3 (PE/NEPA and FD/Construction Projects: Provide information about the planning process that analyzed the investment needs and service objectives of the project

☑ Environmental Readiness for Track 3 FD/Construction Projects: If the NEPA process is complete, an applicant should indicate the date of completion and supporting documentation. If the NEPA process is not yet underway, or underway and not yet complete, indicate where project is in the process and the anticipated date of completion of all NEPA and related milestones.

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Best Practices – Statement of Work

Best Practices – Statement of Work (SOW)

Federal Railroad Administration

U.S. Department of Transportation

August 30, 2016 (final)

CAPITAL COST ESTIMATING

GUIDANCE FOR

PROJECT SPONSORS

☑ Utilize FRA's Standard Cost Categories as a way to organize the scope of work and budget

- https://railroads.dot.gov/rail-network-development/training-guidance/capital-cost-estimating-guidance

☑ Ensure consistency among the project narrative, statement of work, benefit-cost analysis, and other application materials

FRA MAIN WORKSHEET										Issue Date 5/4/16
Grantee Name									Today's Date	8/28/14
Project Name and Location: Rail Project A, Two cities with rural in-between									Yr of Base Year $	2014
Current Phase : Final Design, Ready to Procure Construction									Yr of Revenue Ops	2017

				Base Year Dollars						YOE Dollars Total (X000) (from Inflation Worksheet)
Standard Cost Category		Unit	Quantity	Without Contingency (X000)	Allocated Contingency (X000)	TOTAL (X000)	Unit Cost (X000)	Percent of Construction Cost	Percent of Total Project Cost	
10	**Guideway & Track Elements**	**Lineal Miles of Guideway**	105	1,520,000	140,000	**1,660,000**	15,810	69%	52%	**1,718,100**
10.010	Guideway: At-grade exclusive right-of-way	Lineal Miles of Guideway	100	550,000	50,000	600,000	6,000			
10.020	Guideway: At-grade semi-exclusive (allows cross-traffic)	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0				
10.030	Guideway: At-grade in mixed traffic	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0				
10.040	Guideway: Aerial structure	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0				
10.041	Bridges	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0				
10.042	Viaduct	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0				
10.043	Other Structure	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0				
10.044	Unspecified	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0				
10.050	Guideway: Built-up fill	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0				
10.060	Guideway: Underground cut & cover	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0				
10.061	Cut & Cover Guideway Soft Soils	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0				
10.062	Cut & Cover Guideway Hard Soils	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0				
10.063	Cut & Cover Guideway Vent Soft Soils	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0				
10.064	Cut & Cover Guideway Vent Hard Soils	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0				
10.065	Unspecified	Lineal Miles of Guideway		0		0				

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Best Practices – Statement of Work (SOW)

- ☑ Organize the scope of work into discrete and logically sequenced tasks

- ☑ Provide appropriate timing for tasks

- ☑ Identify the deliverables required to communicate progress and completion of tasks to FRA

- ☑ Check the budget to ensure numbers are consistent with cost information submitted in forms and other areas of the application

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Best Practices – Statement of Work (SOW)

☑ Templates available on FRA's website: https://railroads.dot.gov/grants-loans/grant-administration/statements-work

Best Practices – Benefit-Cost Analysis

BCA – Overview of Steps

Tracks 2 & 3

- Specify your project's <u>base case</u>, <u>alternate case</u>, and <u>timeline</u>

- Show how your project's <u>alternate case</u> will result in specific effects (i.e., <u>project benefits</u>)

- Break down those effects into the smallest sub-elements possible

- Assign values to the effects using USDOT's *BCA Guidance*

- Calculate results and Discount to Base Year

NOTE: Tracks 1 & 4 (regional planning, research, safety programs, non-CRISI trespassing projects) must document project benefits. Any subjective estimates of benefits and costs should be quantified whenever possible, and applicants should provide appropriate evidence to support their subjective estimates. At a minimum, qualitatively describe the project benefits. (See Section D of NOFO.)

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

- The <u>base case</u> reflects the status quo — i.e., the world as it exists today

- The <u>alternate case</u> (i.e., "build scenario") is the proposed project

  - An application for final design or construction should present a *single* project

  - Multiple projects need multiple analyses

  - Avoided costs of alternatives not taken are NOT benefits

- The <u>timeline</u> must be appropriate for the proposed project

  - Match the useful life of the project, but not longer than 30 years

  - Projects with useful life beyond 30 years will have residual value (stations in particular) → Calculate with straight line depreciation

BCA – Scope of Analysis

- Examine *ONLY* the differences between the <u>base case</u> and <u>alternate case</u>

- These differences should reflect realistic projections

  Examples:

  - Intercity passengers will likely change modes if their station is unavailable, while commuters are more likely to divert to another nearby station

  - Host railroads will impose speed/weight restrictions before shutting down completely

  - Rolling stock will have residual value at the end of its useful life

- The *marginal* effects of the alternate case are the <u>project benefits</u>

  - Marginal effects are sometimes undesirable consequences, which should be shown as negative dollar amounts

- The total cost of constructing the project *as well as operating and maintaining (O&M) it for the full timeline* are the <u>project costs</u>

  - O&M costs on new equipment and infrastructure are <u>costs</u>

  - Reductions to existing O&M costs are regarded as project <u>benefits</u>

  - <u>Residual value</u> for remaining useful life is a benefit, NOT subtracted from costs

BCA – Development

- Break down effects into the smallest possible sub-elements

- Provide documentation for inputs and growth rates

Example: Replacing a bridge might result in…

- Removal of slow orders, improving travel speed (travel time savings)

- Reduced wait time at the approaches (travel time savings and emissions)

- Decreased delays at nearby sidings along the corridor (travel time savings and emissions)

- Reduced operations and maintenance costs

BCA – Modal Diversion

- Modal diversion is a marginal choice; *ONLY* count marginal benefits

- New/induced users value the service less than existing users (follow USDOT'S *BCA Guidance*)

- Avoided rail-to-highway diversion benefits could involve:

  - Increased pavement and bridge damage

  - Increased harmful emissions

  - Increased congestion on highways

  - Decreased safety

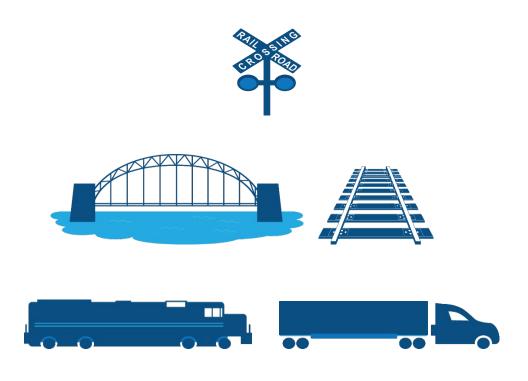- Avoiding passenger revenue losses are <u>transfers</u>, NOT <u>benefits</u>

BCA – Guidelines Recap

For FY21 CRISI grant applications:

- ☑ Document your assumptions in as much detail as possible

- ☑ If the project has separable elements, report benefits and costs of each sub-project separately

- ☑ If your BCA includes modal diversion, include YOUR passenger counts and Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)

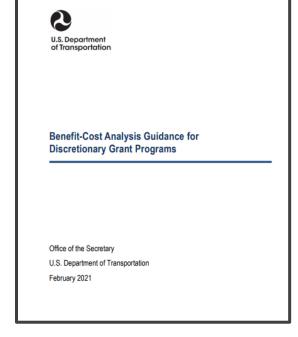- ☑ ***Must include an unlocked Excel spreadsheet that clearly shows your calculations and discounting***

BCA – Guidance/Online Resources

- Follow USDOT's *BCA Guidance*, available at: https://www.transportation.gov/office-policy/transportation-policy/benefit-cost-analysis-guidance

- For rail-specific examples on how to apply the *BCA Guidance*, refer to FRA's BCA FAQ available at: https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/consolidated-rail-infrastructure-and-safety-improvements-crisi-and-federal-state

Best Practices – Environmental Readiness

Environmental Readiness – NEPA

The environmental process, most commonly referred to as NEPA,* is required of all FRA-grant funded projects to document and substantiate our agency's decision to implement the project

- Submit with your CRISI grant application an approved NEPA document, if available and applicable from FRA, FTA, or FHWA

- If there is no previous NEPA documentation associated with the project, you are encouraged to consider the following in the grant application to the best of your knowledge:

  - Known project location and/or possible impacts to the human (e.g., historic, protected populations, noise and vibration) or natural (e.g., wetlands, air, species/habitat, floodplains) environment

  - Anticipated permitting needs (e.g., construction, Clean Water Act Section 404) or coordination/consultation (e.g., State Historic Preservation Officer)

Environmental Readiness – NEPA

- Rely on FRA's experience and expertise to determine the type of NEPA and level of documentation and coordination appropriate for your project — **contact our experts!**

Email: FRAenvironment@dot.gov

Helpful Information Available on FRA's Website

- FRA & NEPA Documentation: https://railroads.dot.gov/rail-network-development/environment/fra-nepa-documentation

- FRA Recommended Trainings & Environmental Resources: https://railroads.dot.gov/rail-network-development/environment/fra-recommended-trainings-environmental-resources

  This web page provides links to recorded webinars, trainings, and other resources that will be of assistance in preparing NEPA documents for rail projects

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Recap & Reminders

Recap & Reminders

- Always read the NOFO carefully

- Determine what a "successful" project will look like

- Use the checklist with the application requirements in the NOFO as you complete your application

- Address all of the evaluation and selection criteria on which you will be rated

  - By clearly and directly responding to the criteria, your application will be easier to read and evaluate

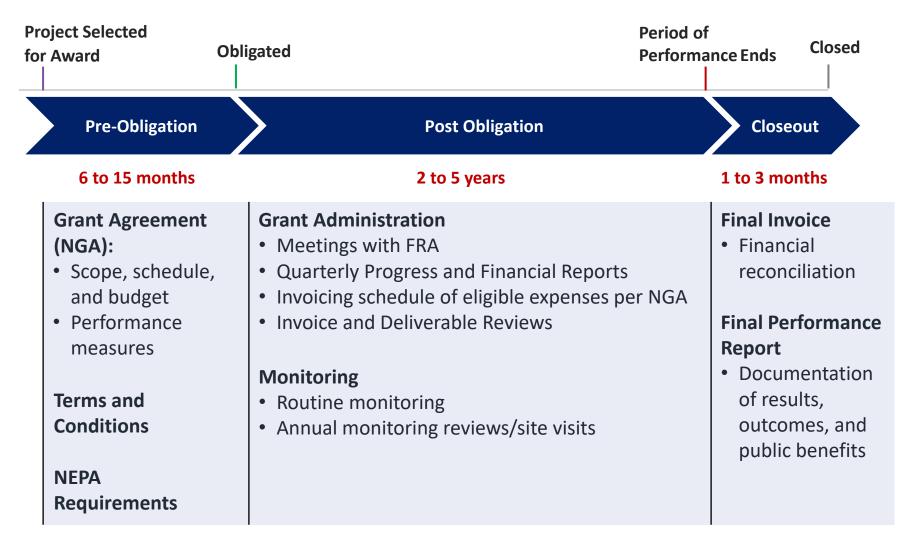 - Don't bury key points!

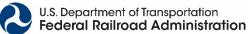BEST PRACTICES

Recap & Reminders

- Verify that all budget figures match corresponding figures cited in different parts of your application package – such as the cover sheet, SOW, Project Narrative, and various forms

  - Numbers in columns and rows should add up properly in budget tables

  - Only include project costs that are expected to be incurred *after* grant selection

- Name key partners, indicate in-place agreements, and include letters of support

- Have an objective "cold reader" — i.e., an individual unfamiliar with the grant application — review your final document before submission

1	5/4/2020	$5,000.00	$425.75	$100.00	$525.75	$509.08	$16.67	$4,490.9
2	6/4/2020	$4,490.92	$425.75	$100.00	$525.75	$510.78	$14.97	$3,980.1
3	7/4/2020	$3,980.14	$425.75	$100.00	$525.75	$512.48	$13.27	$3,467.6
4	8/4/2020	$3,467.65	$425.75	$100.00	$525.75	$514.19	$11.56	$2,953.4
5	9/4/2020	$2,953.46	$425.75	$100.00	$525.75	$515.90	$9.84	$2,437.5
6	10/4/2020	$2,437.56	$425.75	$100.00	$525.75	$517.62	$8.13	$1,919.9
7	11/4/2020	$1,919.94	$425.75	$100.00	$525.75	$519.35	$6.40	$1,400.5
8	12/4/2020	$1,400.59	$425.75	$100.00	$525.75	$521.08	$4.67	$879.5
9	1/4/2021	$879.50	$425.75	$100.00	$525.75	$522.82	$2.93	$356.6

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Grant Lifecycle and Approximate Time Frames

Project Selected for Award

Obligated

Period of Performance Ends

Closed

Pre-Obligation	Post Obligation	Closeout
6 to 15 months	**2 to 5 years**	**1 to 3 months**

Grant Agreement (NGA): • Scope, schedule, and budget • Performance measures **Terms and Conditions** **NEPA Requirements**	**Grant Administration** • Meetings with FRA • Quarterly Progress and Financial Reports • Invoicing schedule of eligible expenses per NGA • Invoice and Deliverable Reviews **Monitoring** • Routine monitoring • Annual monitoring reviews/site visits	**Final Invoice** • Financial reconciliation **Final Performance Report** • Documentation of results, outcomes, and public benefits

Contact Us

Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Connect with us USDOTFRA

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

<u>Points of Contact:</u>

CRISI Program: Doug Gascon
- Douglas.Gascon@dot.gov

Application Process: Matt Lorah
- Matthew.Lorah@dot.gov

BCA: Judah Lynam
- Judah.Lynam@dot.gov

Environmental Readiness: Andréa Martin
- Andrea.Martin@dot.gov

To learn more about FRA Competitive Discretionary Grant Programs, visit:
https://www.fra.dot.gov/grants