

**Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA): Request for Proposals****SUMMARY:**

This solicitation is for proposals to fund up to three cooperative agreements to research, develop and disperse materials that align with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and assist in the broader understanding of how the ADA can be best applied in the transportation of individuals with disabilities. Depending on the quality of proposals received and the amount of funds requested, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will award between one and three cooperative agreements with awards of up to \$300,000 for the one year agreement.

Proposals will be funded by the FTA Office of Civil Rights' Research and Demonstration program for activities to promote knowledge of ADA guidelines and compliance. Cooperative agreements will be one year awards.

The total available funding for this agreement is \$300,000. Actual finding will be based on annual appropriations.

**DATES:** Proposals must be submitted electronically by February 5, 2008. Anyone intending to apply should initiate the process of registering on the <http://www.grants.gov> website immediately to ensure completion of registration before the deadline for submission.

**ADDRESSES:** Proposals must be submitted electronically to <http://www.grants.gov>. Grants.Gov allows organizations to electronically find and apply for competitive grant opportunities from all Federal grant-making agencies. Grants.Gov is the single access point for over 1,000 grant programs offered by the 26 Federal grant-making agencies. Anyone intending to apply should initiate the process of registering on the <http://www.grants.gov> website immediately to ensure completion of registration before the deadline for submission.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Monica McCallum, FTA Office of Civil Rights at 206-220-4462 or [monica.mccallum@dot.gov](mailto:monica.mccallum@dot.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** For FY2008, up to \$300,000 is available for the research, development and dissemination of ADA materials. Such activities include the development of technical assistance materials for consumers and transit regarding the ADA and developing a public information program to distribute this information. The Office of Civil Rights is responsible for oversight of the ADA through compliance reviews and the provision of technical assistance. Available funding is for one year.

**I. Funding Opportunity Description****SUMMARY**

This solicitation is for proposals to fund up to three cooperative agreements to research, develop and disperse materials that align with the Americans with Disabilities Act of

1990 (ADA) and assist in the broader understanding of how the ADA can be best applied in the transportation of individuals with disabilities. Depending on the quality of proposals received and the amount of funds requested, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will award between one and three cooperative agreements with awards of up to \$300,000 for the one year agreement.

## BACKGROUND

The ADA is a comprehensive civil rights law that affirms that that people with disabilities have the same rights and responsibilities as any other citizen of the United States. Signed into law by President George H.W. Bush on July 26, 1990, the ADA created the opportunity for millions of Americans to live independently and take part in community life.

The ADA covers all places that are open to the public, whether they're privately-owned or government facilities; it requires that existing barriers be removed; and it sets standards for construction of new buildings and facilities.

Transportation is covered by regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT); FTA has primary oversight responsibilities for ensuring compliance by its grantees with those provisions that apply to public transportation.

## OBJECTIVES:

The proposed research and demonstration activities will:

- Review past ADA technical assistance materials, compliance reviews and/or letters of finding produced by DOT, FTA, Easter Seals Project Action, and other organizations to discern patterns of practice that are not in compliance with ADA and address areas of need regarding the ADA and transit.
- Develop materials that can be used to increase knowledge about the ADA and proper methods of compliance.
- Rely on substantial input and opinions from both the disabled and the transit communities.
- Facilitate transit ridership among the disabled community.
- Facilitate awareness and applicability of the ADA among transit providers.
- Create a method of dispersal of this material so it is widely available to appropriate grantees.

## TASKS

FTA will fund research and/or demonstration proposals that would create and disseminate information on the Americans with Disabilities Act and provide technical assistance to grantees.

FTA is interested in funding one or more projects that address the following areas of research and/or demonstration:

- Research and/or demonstration projects that address compliance reviews and or letters of finding.
- Research and/or demonstration projects that combine substantial input and opinions from both the disabled and the transit communities.
- Research and/or demonstration projects seeking out innovative ways to improve understanding of the ADA and disseminate this information to the disabled and transit communities.
- Research and/or demonstration projects that arrange meetings for the creation and dispersal of ADA materials.
- Research and/or demonstration projects that issue a quarterly report on the aforementioned activities.

## **II—Award Information**

FTA will fund up to three cooperative agreements for a one year award. Funding for each cooperative agreement under this program will be up to \$300,000. The FTA will participate in activities by attending review meetings, commenting on technical reports, maintaining frequent contact with the project manager and approving key decisions and activities any redirecting activities if needed.

### **Cost Sharing or Matching**

Federal transit funds are available to research projects at up to 100 percent of the project cost, however cost sharing may be used as a criteria for project selection.

## **III. Eligibility Information**

Eligible recipients include State and local government agencies, Native American tribal governments, public and private transit agencies, universities, non-profit organizations, consultants, legally constituted public agencies, operators of public transportation services, and private for-profit organizations.

Staff availability to work closely with FTA Headquarters staff in Washington D.C. may be used as a criteria for project selection.

## **IV. Proposal Content**

This announcement includes all of the information that you need to apply. The SF 424 form is available in grants.gov and is required to be completed.

Most of SF 424 is self explanatory. The application should answer the following items as follows:

- 1a – Application
- 1b – Annual

4a – Leave blank

4b – 26

Other Attachments Form:

1. Applicants should prepare their proposals and work plan to be funded over a one year period.
2. The application should attach a pre-application as outlined in Chapter II (Item 9.b) of FTA Circular 6100.C: Transit Research and Technology Programs: Application Instructions and Program Management Guidelines ([http://www.fta.dot.gov/laws/circulars/leg\\_reg\\_4121.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/laws/circulars/leg_reg_4121.html)). The standard submission for the preapplication is 2-5 pages and must include the information listed in the outline below:

(1) Project Objective. A concise statement of the intended project goal.

(2) Statement of the Problem(s). A description of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project.

(3) Project Description. A description of the proposed project activities to be undertaken in detail by major task with principal output, identification of the person or organization to be responsible for the development, coordination and management of specific activities. The relationship of the proposed project to the problem(s) identified in the previous statement should be stated.

(4) Identify Major Technology Transfer/Dissemination/Outputs. For example, reports (interim, final or other), products, brochures, outreach meetings, etc.

(5) Project Schedule. A project schedule must be presented, including schedule of major tasks, and an overall project schedule. The schedule should be realistic.

(6) Benefits and Beneficiaries. The anticipated benefits and the targeted beneficiaries must be described, including quantification or measure of the potential impact. Be as specific as possible.

(7) Strategic Goals. List which goals of the latest FTA Strategic Business Plan and which elements of the FTA Research and Technology Business Plan will be furthered by the project's results.

(8) Project Budget Justification. If appropriate, discuss specifics about the proposed project budget or breakdown by the given categories, and supplemental information to justify the need for such expenditures. If the budget line items are self-evident, no justification will be necessary. The project budget justification should include identification of any matching funds and their source.

(9) Project Timing. If appropriate, discuss other pending projects or program activities that may relate to and affect the timing of the proposed project. If there

are no special considerations affecting the timing of the proposed project, indicate "N/A."

3. The application should attach a description of key personnel, including biographies.

Anyone intending to apply should initiate the process of registering on the <http://grants.gov> site immediately to ensure completion of registration before the deadline for submission.

## **V. Application Review Information**

A review panel will be convened to review each proposal. Project proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Proposed Research, which includes the applicability of the proposed research to the requirements, the uniqueness and or need for the research, and the expected results.
2. Qualification of Key Personnel, which includes knowledge of and prior experience and writing on emergency preparedness issues and knowledge of sociological and cultural issues related to minority, low-income, LEP, disabled, and older adult populations.
3. Technical Management Plan, which includes the management approach for planning, scheduling, administering, coordinating and conducting the work effort. (The review panel will put a premium on proposals that involve collaboration between public transportation providers, emergency management officials, and community-based organizations).
4. Past Performance on activities relevant to the proposed work.
5. Cost Sharing.
6. Plan for evaluation and data collection.

## **VI. Award administration Information**

The anticipated notification date for the award of this cooperative agreement is the summer of 2007, with an anticipated start date for the successful applicant in the fall. The FTA Administrator will notify the successful entity. Following receipt of the FTA Administrator's notification letter, the successful entity will be required to submit the Formal Application as outlined in Chapter II (Items 10-25) of FTA Circular 6100.C: Transit Research and Technology Programs: Application Instructions and Program Management Guidelines at [http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants/grants\\_financing\\_3552.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants/grants_financing_3552.html) through the FTA Transportation Electronic Award Management (TEAM) system website.

FTA will manage the cooperative agreement through the TEAM system website. Before FTA may award Federal financial assistance through a Federal grant or cooperative agreement, the entity must submit all certifications and assurances pertaining to itself and

its project as required by Federal laws and regulations. Since FY 1995, FTA has been consolidating the various certifications and assurances that may be required of its awardees and the projects into a single document published in the Federal Register. The Annual List of Certifications and Assurances for FTA Grants and Cooperative Agreements and guidelines are published in the Federal Register and posted on the FTA website at [http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants\\_financing\\_93.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants_financing_93.html).

Recipients will be required to manage their projects in accordance with FTA Circular 6100.C: Transit Research and Technology Programs: Application Instructions and Program Management Guidelines at [http://www.fta.dot.gov/laws/circulars/leg\\_reg\\_4121.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/laws/circulars/leg_reg_4121.html). This includes requirements on project management and administration, including quarterly reporting, financial management, and payment.