

Passenger Ferry, Low-No Ferry and Rural Ferry FAQs

Q: Can you explain what is meant by workforce development (Passenger Ferry Program only)?

A: Workforce development includes activities related to employment or education with a direct linkage to the capital project proposed in the application. Examples include developing apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and instructional training for public transportation maintenance and operations occupations.

Q: Is the 0.5 percent dedicated to workforce development activities based on the Federal requested amount or the total project budget?

A: The percentage dedicated to workforce development activities is based on the Federal amount requested from the 5307 Passenger Ferry Program, not the total project budget.

Q: If we have already registered on Grants.gov for submission of other grants, do we need to re-register specifically for this application?

A: No, if you have registered and are up to date you should be able to apply for these opportunities.

Q: Can an applicant submit multiple grant application packages?

A: Yes.

Q: Where can I find the SF-424 Form? Where can I find the Supplemental Form?

A: Both the SF-424 and Program Supplemental forms can be downloaded from Grants.gov under the program opportunity tab. The supplemental form is also available from the FTA website at <https://www.transit.dot.gov/grants/fta-ferry-programs>.

Q: Can I convert the Supplemental Form to a Word document and upload to Grants.gov?

A: No. An applicant must use the PDF supplemental form that is provided at Grants.gov or on FTA's website. Other formats are not readable by FTA's discretionary grant application intake system and will not be accepted.

Q: Can I attach letters of support and other documents to the application?

A: Yes. Grants.gov will allow you to upload supporting documents. Supporting documents may be helpful to reviewers, as they may confirm what is stated in the narrative.

Q: What is the recommended documentation for local match?

A: The appropriate documentation may vary depending on the source of local match. Examples could include a city council or board resolution to provide local match for the project or a letter from the state attesting to the availability of state funding for the project.

Q: Are partial awards possible under this program or is it all or nothing?

A: Applicants may provide a scalable option within their submission. FTA may award an amount that is less than the amount requested, provided that it will fund a project of independent utility.

Q: Is there a maximum/minimum amount that can be requested?

A: No. There is no minimum or maximum application amount. Depending on the applications received, FTA may cap awards at a particular amount to ensure a diversity of funded projects.

Q: How should letters of support be addressed?

A: Address letters of support to the FTA Program Manager identified in the NOFO. The letters must be uploaded into Grants.gov to be considered part of the application.

Q: Can multiple agencies partner together for a single application?

A: Applicants can partner with other agencies. Each application can have only one lead agency who will be the grant recipient. All other entities would then be a subrecipient to that agency. The recipient is also responsible for ensuring that all subrecipients named in the application adhere to the federal and program requirements. Please note, both the recipient and subrecipient(s) must be eligible applicants.

Q: How can an entity determine whether it operates within the area of a Census-designated urbanized area?

A: You may contact your local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) or your FTA Regional Office for assistance. The Regional Office contact information can be found at www.transit.dot.gov/about/regional-offices/regional-offices.

Q: Is there a difference between the FTA's Passenger Ferry Grant Program and FHWA's Ferry Boat Discretionary Grant Funding Program?

A: There are subtle differences between FTA's and FHWA's programs. However, FHWA no longer has a discretionary program. It is now formula. Please refer to FHWA's webpage for more information: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/>.

Q: What is the definition of "Passenger Ferry" for applicants to the ferry programs?

A: FTA defines a passenger ferry as a vessel providing regular and continuing shared ride service that regularly accommodates walk-on passengers not traveling in motor vehicles. Passenger ferries may or may not also accommodate private passenger vehicles with the walk-on passengers. A passenger ferry is a type of fixed guideway public transportation and excludes sightseeing service.

Eligible Applicants

Q: What is the difference between a “direct” recipient and a “designated” recipient?

A: Designated recipients are designated by the state governor or his/her designee to receive and/or sub-allocate FTA funding. Direct recipients are identified by a designated recipient to receive funding directly from FTA. Both direct and designated recipients are eligible to apply directly for the Passenger Ferry and Low-No Ferry programs.

Q: What is a local governmental authority?

A: A local government authority includes: (1) a political subdivision of a state, (2) an authority of at least one state or political subdivision of a state, (3) an Indian tribe, or (4) a public corporation, board, or commission established under the laws of a state.

Q: Can private ferry companies or non-profits apply?

A: Private ferry operators and non-profit entity are not eligible to apply directly for funding. However, they may work with eligible recipients to operate assets purchased through FTA’s Ferry Programs, assist in the construction of facilities, etc.

Eligible Projects

Q: What is the definition of “regular schedule” for applicants to the Rural Ferry program?

A: FTA defines a regular schedule as a published schedule for either seasonal or annual ferry service. Please note that applicants must document their eligibility for the Rural Ferry Program by providing documentation such as dated and published sailing schedules and route maps.

Q: What fueling infrastructure costs are eligible under the Low-No Ferry program?

A: Eligible costs under the Low-No Ferry program include related charging or other fueling infrastructure (for which the applicants will maintain satisfactory continuing control) to reduce emissions or produce zero onboard emissions under normal operation.

Q: There’s no ferry service in my rural area right now. Can I apply for funding under the rural ferry program to start a ferry service?

A: No. Rural ferry program funding is for ferry transportation service that operated a regular schedule at any time during the five-year period from March 1, 2015, to March 1, 2020.

Q: My ferry service is for cars only. Can I apply for a ferry grant under this NOFO?

A: No. Ferry systems that accommodate cars must also accommodate walk-on passengers to be eligible for funding under any of the three ferry programs.

Q: Regarding readiness, would an applicant have an ability to update the application while the grant application is pending?

A: Once the application is submitted, additional information submitted by the applicant will not be accepted. However, FTA reserves the right to contact the applicant for clarification of any information submitted.

Q: Can State DOTs apply on behalf of public agencies within the state in which they administer FTA funds?

A: Yes. State DOTs may apply on behalf of public agencies.

Q: Where would I find FTA policy regarding useful life of ferry boats?

A: The useful life of a ferry depends on several factors, including the type and use of the ferry. FTA offers the following suggested minimums of useful life:

- (a) Passenger ferries: twenty-five years of service.
- (b) Other ferries (without refurbishment): thirty years of service.
- (c) Other ferries (with refurbishment): sixty years of service.

Q: Does our project need to be included in the TIP and STIP to be eligible for funding?

A: Yes. However, if the project is not in the TIP or the STIP, the proposal may state when the grant funds can be obligated and indicate the timeframe under which the TIP or STIP can be amended to include the proposed project.

Q: Can fare-related software, such as mobile ticketing, be included as an eligible project cost?

A: Yes, only under the Passenger Ferry and Rural Ferry programs.

Q: Is dredging an eligible activity?

A. Dredging as its own activity is not considered a capital project. If the dredging is a part of a larger eligible capital project, for example if it is necessary to construct the port infrastructure then it is eligible.

Q: Are design activities considered to be “planning” or “construction” under the ferry programs?

A: A design activity that is incidental to the total project cost and directly related to the capital project would be eligible. Design activities on their own, without the end product of the grant resulting in a capital project for an operable transit asset are ineligible.

Q: Are low or zero emission propulsion systems that are retrofitted to existing vessels to make the vessel low or zero-emission eligible for funding under the Low-No Ferry Pilot Program?

A: Yes. Retrofitting existing ferries with low or zero emission propulsion technology is eligible.