

Buses and Bus Facilities and Low or No Emission Programs (5339 (b) and 5339 (c))

Application Submission

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

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

Can an applicant submit the same project in both competitions?

Yes, but with a caveat. Projects that qualify under the Low-No Program are eligible under either program; however, projects for traditionally fueled vehicles are only eligible under the Bus Program. In addition, the Low-No Program allows for partnerships with private sector manufacturers while the Bus Program requires that all projects follow a competitive procurement.

Can an applicant submit multiple grant application packages?

Yes, this is allowable. Projects will be evaluated on a project by project basis regardless of how they are submitted to grants.gov.

Where do you find the SF-424 Form? Where do you find the Supplemental Form?

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 www.transit.dot.gov/busprogram.

What is the character limit on the narrative sections of the supplemental form?

The character limit for each response is 4,000 characters. If you have additional information you would like to provide, you may include it as a separate attachment and reference the attachment in the narrative response. Please note that attachments should be used to support the narrative responses, and that information or documents not cited in the narrative may not be reviewed.

I am a designated recipient and will be applying for multiple urban agencies. Should I use multiple SF 424s or just one SF 424 with multiple supplemental forms?

An applicant can choose either option.

Please detail the sub-criteria under Demonstration of need and Demonstration of benefit.

This information is detailed in the NOFO. Please refer to the criteria section for each respective program.

What is the recommended documentation for local match?

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.

When demonstrating the state of need for replacement buses, is it best to attach documentation or verbalize the status in the narrative?

The narrative should provide a complete explanation of the need for replacement buses, including any relevant supporting information. Attachments, such as a fleet inventory, vehicle status report, or other documentation, may be used to support the statements in the narrative response.

How will FTA evaluate Demonstration of Need for proposals for new or expanded facilities?

FTA has defined the criteria for Demonstration of Need in the NOFO, including specific guidance for expansion projects.

If awarded, do funds need to be expended by a certain time?

Funds must be obligated within 4 years (year of award plus 3 years).

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

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.

Can you explain what is meant by workforce development?

Workforce development includes activities related to employment or education with a direct linkage to the capital project. Examples include developing apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and instructional training for public transportation maintenance and operations occupations. Please refer to Section 3009 of the [FAST Act](#) for additional eligible activities.

Is workforce development related to CAA/ADA vehicles also at 85/15 FTA/Local match?

Although the match for CAA and ADA projects is 85% federal, 15% local match, workforce development match for CAA and ADA projects is still 80% federal, 20% local.

Can credit from partners for payment of operating costs for transit service qualify as local match or portion of local match?

Eligible sources of local match include the following: Cash from non-Government sources of that revenues from providing public transportation services; revenues derived from the sale of advertising and concessions; amounts received under a service agreement with a State or local social service agency or private social service organization; revenues generated from value capture financing mechanisms; or funds from an undistributed cash surplus; replacement or depreciation cash fund or reserve; new capital; or allowable in-kind contributions.

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

There is a maximum award limit of \$21.1 million or 10% per applicant for the Bus Program but no limit for the Low-No Program. Also, there is no floor or minimum application or award amount for either program.

Who should letters of support be addressed to?

Letters of support should be addressed to either the Administrator or Secretary of Transportation at Department of Transportation 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE Washington, DC 20590.

Eligible Applicants

What is the difference between a "direct" recipient and a "designated" recipient?

Direct recipients are recipients of FTA Section 5307 grants. Designated recipients are direct recipients that have been identified by the state governor or his/her designee to receive and/or sub-allocate funds under FTA's Section 5307 Program. Both types of entities are eligible to apply directly for these programs.

Can a non-designated recipient apply separately?

FTA Section 5307 direct recipients, states, and federally recognized tribes may apply directly. Eligible sub-recipients may partner with eligible recipients but cannot be the primary applicant.

Eligible Projects

What projects are eligible for the increased Federal share associated with the Clean Air Act (CAA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?

Please refer to FTA's Circular [5100.1](#) for Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.) and American Disabilities Act requirements (49 C.F.R. parts 37 and 38).

Do "facilities" include transportation centers or just shops/yards?

Both types of projects are eligible under the Bus and Low-No Programs.

Can we use this grant to pay for an implementation study that looks into replacing diesel fleet with all-electric bus fleet?

Both programs are for capital projects only. Studies and planning efforts are not eligible expenses. However, a Low-No Program project proposal may include project administration costs directly related to the deployment of eligible vehicles in revenue service.

Buses and Bus Facilities Program – 5339(b)

Application

Can an agency partner with an OEM for a bus and bus facilities grant?

No, they must follow the competitive procurement process as defined under FTA's guidelines.

Eligible Projects

Would a bus transfer and park & ride facility be eligible under the competitive Bus Program?

Yes, but it must be adjacent to or serve an existing bus service.

What is given higher priority, replacement buses or expansion buses?

Both types of projects may be strong candidates for funding. The applicant should be sure to address the selection criteria in the NOFO to explain the need for, and potential benefits of the proposed project.

Are repowers eligible for the bus program?

Yes, but only if they meet the standards identified within the 5100.1 Circular (Link provided: https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/Final_FTA_C_5100_4-16-15.pdf).

For replacement vehicles, how does the Ladders of Opportunity initiative apply?

The applicant should show linkages to the sub-criteria identified for the Demonstration of Benefits criterion. That sub-criteria are identified in the NOFO.

Low or No Emission Program - 5339(c)

2015 LoNo Program

What is the status of the FY2015 Low-No applications submitted last November?

The projects were announced on [April 19th](#), 2016.

Application

For Low-No, is preference given for non-attainment areas even though it is not required?

No, this is no longer a program requirement or selection criterion.

For Low-No, will projects that only request incremental costs be prioritized over projects that request the full amount?

Projects to fund the incremental costs of a project may receive a higher rating for the local financial commitment to the project, but will still be evaluated based on the remainder of the evaluation criteria provided in the NOFO.

Eligible Applicants

Can a public agency partner w/a private firm on either a low-no or bus/bus facilities application and meet the competitive procurement requirement?

Yes. If an application that includes a partnership is awarded, then the competition itself would have fulfilled the competitive procurement requirement.

Can multiple agencies partner together for a single application under Low-No?

States and other eligible applicants may submit consolidated proposals for projects in urbanized areas. Proposals may contain projects to be implemented by recipients or sub-recipients. If a single project proposal involves multiple providers, the proposal must include a detailed statement regarding the role of each provider in implementing the project.

Eligible Projects

On Low-No, eligible projects appear to be capital items only, however, we have a consultant who is interested in partnering with us to provide data services. Is data collection and analysis eligible?

It depends on how it is related to the project. Data collection could qualify as incidental project management expenses associated with a Low-No partnership. Applicants would need to define how these expenses are a part of the project implementation strategy and are directly associated with acquiring these vehicles and deploying them in regular service.

Can CNG powered buses and facilities be competitive in this process, or is it likely only electric or fuel cell projects will be selected? Is liquid propane eligible or is it the same as CNG?

CNG vehicles are eligible but CNG-powered vehicles may not be rated as highly as other alternative fuel projects that have lower emission than CNG. Proposed vehicles must make greater reductions in energy consumption and harmful emissions, including direct carbon emissions, than comparable standard buses or other low or no emission buses. (49 USC 5339(c)(5)(A))

Does the vehicle need to pass Altoona first for Low-No?

Applicants should specify whether their intended bus models have already completed testing, and if not, provide a proposed timeline for completing FTA's Bus Testing requirements and provide assurance that the proposed model will successfully complete testing prior to deployment.

Would hybrid electric transmissions be an eligible expense; or any components that impact emissions?

New low or no emission buses are only eligible for this program. Vehicle components or reconditioned or repowered bus projects are not eligible under this program.

If an agency plans to lease zero-emission buses, are the operating costs (i.e. lease payments) eligible?

Lease payments are considered a capital expense. Operating assistance isn't eligible under this program.