

Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026 Notice of Funding Opportunity
Railroad Crossing Elimination (Crossing Safety) Program
Federal Railroad Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation

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1. BASIC INFORMATION

SUMMARY OVERVIEW OF KEY INFORMATION	
Topic	Description
Federal Agency Name	Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)
Funding Opportunity Title	The Fiscal Year 2025 and 2026 Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Railroad Crossing Elimination (Crossing Safety) Program
Announcement Type	This is the first announcement for Fiscal Years 2025 and 2026 Crossing Safety Program
Funding Opportunity Number	FR-RCE-26-001
Assistance Listing Number	20.327 Crossing Safety Program
Funding Details	The total funding available for awards under this NOFO is up to \$1,146,528,000. ¹
Key Dates	Applications Due: no later than 11:59 p.m. EDT, June 8, 2026
Executive Summary	The purpose of the Crossing Safety Program is to fund highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossing improvement projects, including but not limited to grade crossing elimination projects, that focus on improving the safety and mobility of people and goods. See Section 3(a) and (c) for a list of eligible recipients and activities.
Agency Contact Information	Email: Jenny.Zeng@dot.gov; Jenny.Mancino@dot.gov; Reagan.Morgan@dot.gov

a. Special Funding Set-Asides

Of the \$1,146,528,000 available award amount, certain funding amounts are set aside for the following purposes under this NOFO:

- i. Planning Projects: At least \$36,000,000, or three percent, of the total FY 2025-2026 Crossing Safety Program grant funds are available for planning projects described in 49 U.S.C. § 22909(d)(6). Of these funds, \$9,000,000 will be made available for planning projects located in Rural Areas or on Tribal Lands. FRA specifically expects to support planning projects that seek to advance efforts to grade separate at least one or more at-grade crossings. Planning projects are also subject to special considerations for award size and preference, as detailed in Section 3(c) of this notice.
- ii. Rural or Tribal Set-Aside: At least \$229,305,600, or 20 percent, of the total amount appropriated of the Crossing Safety Program funds will be made available for projects located in Rural Areas or on Tribal Lands, as required by 49 U.S.C. §

¹ The funding in this NOFO is made available by the FY 2025 and 2026 advance appropriations provided in Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). Should additional Crossing Safety Program funds become available after the release of this NOFO, FRA may elect to award such additional funds to applications received under this NOFO. Any awards made under this NOFO are subject to the availability of appropriated funds. In addition to the \$1,146,528,000 in Crossing Safety Program funding made available in this NOFO, \$29,472,000 in Crossing Safety Program funds will be separately made available for Special Transportation Circumstances grants and \$24,000,000 in Crossing Safety Program funds will be set aside for award and program oversight conducted by FRA.

22909(f)(3)(A).² A project's rural designation is based on whether all or the majority (greater than 50 percent) of the project's location, based on geospatial data provided (see Section 4(a)), is in a Rural Area, as defined in FRA's Key Terms.³ At least \$11,465,280, or five percent, of these set-aside funds will be made available for projects in counties with 20 or fewer residents per square mile, according to the most recent decennial census, provided that sufficient eligible applications have been submitted. If FRA elects to fund a component of the project, then FRA will evaluate whether that component is in a Rural Area.

- iii. Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Safety Information and Education Programs Set-Aside: In addition, FRA will make at least \$3,000,000 available for grants that carry out Highway-Rail Grade Crossing safety information and education programs. FRA expects activities to promote further awareness of grade crossing safety will be based on existing best practices and such efforts will be implemented in a comprehensive manner through coordination with relevant stakeholders.

2. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

a. Program History, Funding, and Authorization

The Crossing Safety Program was established and authorized under 49 U.S.C. § 22909. Funding under this NOFO was made available by the FY 2025 and 2026 Advance Appropriations in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Div. J, Tit VIII, Pub. L. No. 117-58 (November 15, 2021) (IIJA).

b. Program Goals and Objectives

The Crossing Safety Program intends to fund highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossing improvement projects, including but not limited to elimination projects, that improve safety and mobility of people and goods. Such projects will improve American rail infrastructure to enhance rail safety, improve the health and safety of communities, eliminate highway-rail and pathway-rail grade crossings that are frequently blocked by trains, or reduce the impacts that freight movement and railroad operations may have on underserved communities.

c. Expected Outcomes

The Crossing Safety Program's focus is to improve safety and mobility of people and goods at grade crossings. FRA expects outcomes of selected projects to include:

- i. Safety: Reduce highway-rail grade crossing incidents, trespass incidents, and train accidents.
- ii. Improvement of Mobility of People and Goods: Eliminate highway-rail and pathway-rail grade crossings that are frequently blocked by trains in order to enhance rail safety, improve the health and safety of communities, and reduce the impacts that freight movement and railroad operations may have on underserved communities. 49 § U.S.C. 22909(b).

² FRA awarded all of the FY 2022, 2023, and 2024 Rural or Tribal set-aside funds to eligible applicants. No additional set-aside funds are carried forward to FY 2025-2026.

³ For all defined terms in this NOFO, please see <https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/definitions-key-terms-discretionary-grant-programs>.

3. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

a. Eligible Applicants

The following entities are eligible applicants for all projects permitted under this notice:

- i. A State (including the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and other United States territories and possessions).
- ii. A political subdivision of a State.
- iii. A federally recognized Indian Tribe.
- iv. A unit of local government or a group of local governments.
- v. A public port authority.
- vi. A metropolitan planning organization.
- vii. A group of entities described in any of paragraphs (i) through (vii).

Applications must be submitted by the lead applicant who, if selected, will be the recipient of the Crossing Safety Program grant award.

b. Cost Sharing

The Federal share of total costs for Crossing Safety Program projects funded under this notice shall not exceed 80 percent, consistent with 49 U.S.C. § 22909(g) and 2 CFR part 200.

Applicants must identify the source(s) of the project's non-Federal share. These funds must be clearly and distinctly reflected as part of the Total Project Cost.

c. Federal Award Information

Applicants are not limited in the number of projects for which they seek funding. Applicants submitting more than one application should submit a priority ranking of their applications that is consistent with each application package submitted.

- i. Award Type: FRA will make awards for projects selected under this notice through grant agreements or cooperative agreements consistent with 2 CFR 200.201. FRA will determine the type of agreement after project selection and prior to grant obligation. The term "grant" is used throughout this document to reference funding awarded through a grant agreement or a cooperative agreement. The funding provided under this NOFO will be made available to recipients on a reimbursable basis. In addition, recipients are expected to expend non-Federal funds at the required percentage concurrent with Federal funds throughout the period of performance.

The [FRA Grant Agreement Requirements](#) consist of three parts:

- Attachment 1: Standard Terms and Conditions;
- Attachment 2: Project-Specific Terms and Conditions; and
- Terms and Conditions Exhibits.

These templates are subject to revision. If selected for award, all three parts of the grant agreement will be incorporated into the final grant agreement.

- ii. Award Size: Projects may require more funding than is available. FRA encourages applicants to propose a project that has operational independence, or a component of such project, which can be completed and implemented with funding under this NOFO as a part of the total project cost together with other, non-federal sources. There are no predetermined maximum dollar thresholds for individual awards, but no more than 20 percent of the grant funds available in any fiscal year (\$229,305,600 for the combined FY25-26 round) will be awarded for projects in any single State.
- iii. Award Minimums and Planning Exception: FRA will not award grants for less than \$1,000,000, except for a Planning project, as described in 49 U.S.C. § 22909(d)(6). Projects requesting less than \$1,000,000 must consist solely of Planning activities to be considered eligible. Applications that request funding for a combination of Planning and Project Development activities must exceed \$1,000,000 in Federal assistance under this NOFO. For the purposes of the award minimum requirement, FRA considers Highway-Rail Grade Crossing safety information and education projects to be Planning projects described in 49 U.S.C. § 22909(d)(6).

d. Eligible Projects

The following projects are eligible for funding:

- i. Grade separation or closure, including through the use of a bridge, embankment, tunnel, or combination thereof.
- ii. Track Relocation.
- iii. The improvement or installation of protective devices, signals, signs, or other measures to improve safety, provided that such activities are related to a separation or relocation project described in paragraph (i) or (ii).
- iv. Other means to improve the safety and mobility of people and goods at highway-rail grade crossings (including technological solutions).⁴
- v. A group of related projects described in paragraphs (i) through (iv) that would collectively improve the mobility of people and goods.
- vi. The planning, environmental review, and design of an eligible project described in paragraphs (i) through (v).

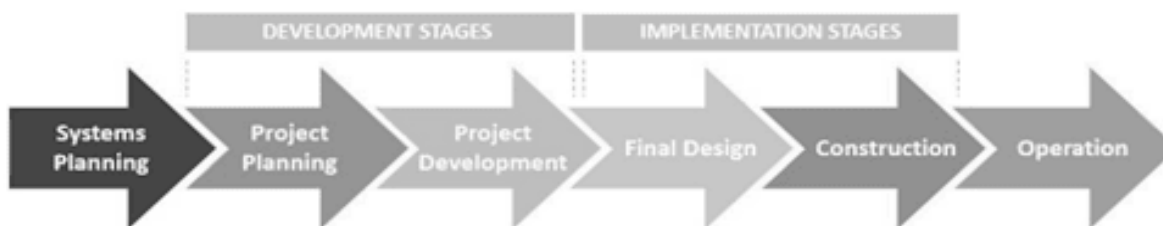
In accordance with 49 U.S.C. § 22909(j)(1), grants under the Crossing Safety Program may be awarded for commuter rail passenger transportation projects. Consistent with 49 U.S.C. § 22909(j)(2), FRA will transfer such projects to the Federal Transit Administration to administer.

e. Project Lifecycle Stages

Applicants must align eligible Capital Project activities with the Lifecycle Stages outlined in FRA's [Railroad Capital Project Guidance](#). If an application for more than one lifecycle is selected, FRA intends to obligate the funding in phases, by lifecycle (e.g., a first obligation for project development (PE and NEPA phases) and a second obligation for FD/Construction). In such cases, after the Recipient completes the scope of work under each obligation, FRA will

⁴ Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Safety Information and Education Programs are eligible under this category. FRA generally interprets this project eligibility category to relate to projects that directly improve safety and mobility at existing at-grade crossing locations.

evaluate the Recipient's compliance with the terms and conditions of the award and consistency with the application scope, schedule, and budget proposed for all life cycles in the application. FRA may, in its discretion, choose not to advance the project to the next life cycle phase.



Systems Planning and Operation activities are not eligible under the Crossing Safety Program.

Applicants must identify whether their Capital Project includes the acquisition of real property interests. FRA will only consider right-of-way acquisition for applications seeking eligible Construction funding. Any project that requires acquisition of real property is subject to requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, 42 U.S.C. § 4601 et seq. (Uniform Act) and its implementing regulations found at 49 CFR part 24.

4. APPLICATION CONTENTS AND FORMAT

Applicants must submit required information and components of the application package, as described in this section, by the appointed deadline to be considered for funding.

a. Project Narrative

The Project Narrative may not exceed 25 pages in length (excluding cover pages, a table of contents, project funding and grade crossing tables, and supporting documentation). FRA will not review or consider project narratives beyond the 25-page limitation. If applicable, applicants must clearly identify portions and cite page numbers of relevant information in supporting documents. The Project Narrative must adhere to the outline detailed below.

I. Cover Page: Include a cover page that lists the required elements as outlined below in either a table or formatted list. Applicants may refer to FRA's sample to complete this element of the application.⁵

⁵ <https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/crossing-safety-program-rce-fy-2025-2026-fillable-cover-page>

Cover Page	
Project Title	
Applicant Name	
Amount of Crossing Safety Program funding requested under this NOFO ⁶	\$
Total amount of proposed non-Federal cost share	\$
Amount of non-Crossing Safety Program Federal funding (if applicable) including pending awards	\$
Total Project Cost	\$
Source(s) of proposed non-Federal cost share and other Federal funding (<i>provide funding amount by source</i>)	
Was a Federal grant application previously submitted for this Project? <i>If yes – please specify the program; funding year; and project title of the previous application. Identify any differences between the applications.</i>	
City(ies) where the project is located	
County(ies) where the project is located	
State(s) where the project is located	
Congressional district(s) where the project is located	
What percent of funding is spent in a Rural Area?	%
Amount (if any) of funding request eligible for set-aside funds	<u>Amount:</u>
	<u>Set-Aside(s):</u>
Lifecycle Stage(s) proposed to be funded by this NOFO	<input type="checkbox"/> Project Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Project Development <input type="checkbox"/> Final Design <input type="checkbox"/> Right-of-Way Acquisition ⁷ <input type="checkbox"/> Construction <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Capital
Current Lifecycle Stage and its anticipated completion date	<input type="checkbox"/> Systems Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Project Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Project Development <input type="checkbox"/> Final Design <input type="checkbox"/> Right-of-Way Acquisition <input type="checkbox"/> Construction <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Capital <u>Anticipated Date of Completion:</u>

Is the project located on real property owned by someone other than the applicant? <i>If yes – list real property owners and the nature of the property interest.</i>	
Host railroad/infrastructure owner(s) of project assets	
Other impacted railroad(s) (including tenants)	
If the applicant is a commuter railroad: list the intercity passenger and/or freight railroad service(s) utilizing the proposed project.	
Has the applicant executed an agreement with the host railroad regarding use of the railroad right-of-way where the project will be located consistent with <u>49 U.S.C. 22905(c)</u> ⁸ (if applicable)?	Yes/No/Pending/Not Applicable
Is the project currently programmed in any medium- or long-range planning document? ⁹ <i>If yes – specify planning document.</i>	
Is the project located on a potential corridor selected for the Corridor Identification and Development Program? ¹⁰ <i>If yes – specify the corridor(s).</i>	
Is the project expected to need a waiver under FRA’s domestic preference requirements? ¹¹	Yes/No

II. Project Summary: Applicants must provide a 4–6 sentence summary of the proposed project and scope of work. The applicant should explain challenges the proposed project aims to address and summarize the intended outcomes that will result from the proposed project.

III. Grant Funds, Sources, and Use of Project Funds: Applicants should provide a project budget that lists all funding sources (Federal and non-Federal), specifying how these will contribute to each Lifecycle Stage(s) and project activity, and present the data in year of expenditure dollars and percentages. FRA will not award more funding for a project than is requested in an application. If there is a discrepancy between materials, FRA will use the funding amounts shown on the applicant’s SF 424 as the amount requested for funding, as the SF 424 is the official amount requested from the Crossing Safety Program.

⁶ FRA will round funding requests down to the nearest whole dollar.

⁷ FRA will consider funding right-of-way acquisition only for applications that seek Construction funding.

⁸ FRA’s FAQs about Rail Improvement Grant Conditions, available at: <https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/frequently-asked-questions-about-rail-improvement-grant-conditions-under-49-usc-ss-22905c1>.

⁹ For example, State Rail Plan, interregional intercity passenger rail systems planning study, State Freight Plan, TIP, STIP, MPO Long Range Transportation Plan, State Long Range Transportation Plan, etc.

¹⁰ For more information about selected Corridors under the Corridor Identification Program, please visit: <https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/fy22-CID-program-selections>.

¹¹ Funds are subject to the domestic preference requirement in 49 U.S.C. 22905(a) (FRA Buy America) and the Build America, Buy America Act, Pub. L. No. 117-58, sections 70901-52.

The project budget must be specific to the project scope described in the application. FRA encourages applicants to use its project funding templates, available below in Table 1 or 2.¹² Applicants may use additional rows and columns, or additional project funding tables as appropriate. For a Major Capital Project, as defined by FRA's Key Terms, applicants are encouraged to provide an annualized budget in year of expenditure dollars.

Applicants must specify whether non-Federal funds are currently available for the project, or if the applicant will need to secure the non-Federal funds upon selection. Applicants should submit evidence of secured non-Federal funds and other Federal funding. If applicable, the applicant should provide the type, source and estimated value of any proposed in-kind contributions, as well as explain how the contributions meet the requirements in 2 CFR 200.306.

Applicants should explain whether the requested Federal funding under this NOFO must be obligated or spent by a certain date due to dependencies or relationships with other Federal or non-Federal funding sources, related projects, law, or other factors. Applicants should also identify other federal Funds the applicant is applying for or intends to use. Applicants should also indicate whether they anticipate securing financing for the project, as well as what the source, amount, and terms will be. All costs must be consistent with the terms of 2 CFR part 200 and FRA's Standard Terms and Conditions.

Table 1: Example project funding overview table for Capital Projects.

Lifecycle Stage	Project Component/Task	Crossing Safety Federal	Other Federal	Applicant Cost Share	Other Federal Cost Share	Total
N/A	Project Administration and Management	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Project Planning		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Project Development		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Final Design		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
	(ROW if requested)	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Construction		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Total		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

For projects that include more than one component, e.g., a grade crossing separation and grade crossing safety improvements, applicants should articulate the costs by specific activity. Applicants may include additional tables and/or rows if multiple components are funded.

¹² <https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/crossing-safety-program-rce-funding-table-templates-and-examples>

Table 2: Example project funding overview table for non-Capital Projects.

Project Component/Task	Crossing Safety Federal	Other Federal	Applicant Cost Share	Other Federal Cost Share	Total
Project Administration and Management	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Total	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

IV. Applicant Eligibility Criteria: Applicants must explain how they meet the eligibility criteria outlined in Section 3(a) of this notice. Where applicable, the applicant should include citations to enabling legislation in support of the applicant’s eligibility to receive Federal funds under the Crossing Safety Program.

V. Project Eligibility Criteria: Applicants must explain how the proposed project meets the project eligibility criteria outlined in Section 3(d) of this notice.

VI. Detailed Project Description: Applicants must provide a detailed project description by project component and Lifecycle Stage as applicable, that expands upon the Project Summary. Provide additional background on the challenges the project aims to address; a summary of current and proposed railroad operations in the project area and service frequency, which should include identification of all railroad owners and operators; typical daily, weekly, or annual train counts by operator. Provide the primary expected project outcomes such as increased safety outcomes or reduced delays/blocked crossings, improved mobility, rail network asset condition, and performance, or similar outcomes and benefits; the expected users and beneficiaries of the project, including all railroad operators; and any other information the applicant deems necessary to justify the proposed project.

FRA encourages applicants to include any completed alternatives analyses as appropriate. If roadwork is a necessary component of the project, FRA expects applicants to include a justification for how roadwork elements are directly related to improving safety at the grade crossing and to clearly identify all costs for roadwork elements in the budget table.

- A. **Statement of Work:** Provide a statement of work including specific project components and tasks, a proposed schedule, key objectives, milestones and deliverables.
- B. **Environmental information, if applicable:** Applicants should explain what Federal and, if appropriate, State, Tribal, and local environmental reviews and permits are likely required to implement the project, and the status of those reviews and permits.¹³ If the applicant has not started the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for the project, the applicant should describe any preliminary environmental analysis completed, state the anticipated level of NEPA documentation

¹³ Additional information regarding FRA’s environmental processes and requirements are located at: <https://railroads.dot.gov/rail-network-development/environment/environment>.

needed (i.e., categorical exclusion, environmental assessment, or environmental impact statement), and identify the anticipated permits, approvals, and authorizations.

- C. Grade crossing information: Applicants should include a grade crossing table in the application with the information discussed below.¹⁴

Table 3: Grade crossing information for proposed project.

USDOT Grade Crossing Inventory #	Proposed Improvement	Rail Operator(s)	Railroad Owner	Latitude Coordinates (at least five decimal places of precision)	Longitude Coordinates (at least five decimal places of precision)

Applicants must provide the following information for each grade crossing to be addressed in the application:

- a. DOT grade crossing inventory number and location using latitude and longitude coordinates, expressed with at least five decimal places of precision. For projects involving pathway-rail grade crossings that do not have DOT grade crossing inventory numbers or data, applicants should provide as much locational data as possible;
- b. The proposed improvement requested in the application, using “new, separated, closed or improved” (such as gate additions, lights, etc.) to describe proposed improvement;
- c. The operator(s) (i.e., an entity that operates on the railroad right-of-way);
- d. The property owner(s) (i.e., an entity that owns the underlying property or right-of-way); and
- e. The infrastructure owner(s) (i.e., an entity that owns the infrastructure within the railroad right-of-way).

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit safety justifications for the project that rely on standardized, objective safety metrics and data, if available, including data from sources such as: GradeDec.Net; 49 CFR part 234; safety metrics found in Appendix D of 49 CFR part 222; the FRA crossing incident dashboard; or other relevant safety data or metrics. FRA will analyze data for each grade crossing, including information and data detailing the history of each crossing's incident history for the past five calendar years (January 1, 2021-December 31, 2025), to evaluate the existing level of risk for each grade crossing proposed for improvement, as well as other tools and measures to better inform selection evaluation.

¹⁴ If more space is needed, the information may be provided in a separate, unlocked Excel file attachment. The table will not count against the 25-page project narrative page limit. <https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/fra-grade-crossing-table-template-excel>.

- D. Highway-rail grade crossing safety information and education programs: For these projects, specify how the program will enhance education and informational outreach to help prevent and reduce pedestrian, motor vehicle and other accidents, incidents, injuries, and fatalities, and how the program will help improve awareness along railroad rights-of-way and at Highway-Rail Grade Crossings.

VII. Project Location: Applicants should include geospatial data for the project and a map. Geospatial data must be expressed in decimal degrees for latitude and longitude with at least five decimal places of precision. If the project includes a length of track (in the case of track relocation to close a grade crossing), the start and end coordinates for each corridor or segment must be provided. Additionally, applicants must include the Congressional districts in which the project will take place.

VIII. Evaluation and Selection Criteria: Applicants must include a thorough discussion of how the proposed project meets the evaluation and selection criteria. As described in Section 6 of this notice, FRA will evaluate applications based on project readiness, technical merit, and project benefits.

FRA will evaluate all eligible and complete applications using the evaluation merit criteria outlined in this section to determine project readiness, technical merit, and project benefits. Applicants must address the following:

- i. Project Readiness: FRA will evaluate project and applicant risk based on the applicant's preparedness and capacity to implement the proposed project.

Please describe the status of required NEPA actions; necessary agreements with infrastructure owners and project partners; and evidence that the project is ready to undertake the activities for the Lifecycle Stage in which funding is being sought.

- ii. Technical Merit: FRA will evaluate the degree to which the application describes a reasonable and appropriate approach to achieve the expected outcomes.

Please describe how the proposed project elements are appropriate for the funding request; the applicant's commitment of the necessary (legal, financial and technical) resources and skilled workforce to carry out the project; and the applicant's satisfactory continuing control over the use of and willingness to maintain the equipment or facilities.

- iii. Project Benefits: FRA will evaluate whether the project as designed is likely to achieve the intended safety and rail service benefits.

Please describe how the proposed project benefits improve safety at Highway-Rail or Pathway-Rail Grade Crossings; proposes to grade separate, eliminate, or close one or more Highway-Rail or Pathway-Rail Grade Crossings; improves the mobility of both people and goods; reduces emissions, protects the environment, and provides community benefit (including noise reduction); improves access to emergency services; improves access to communities; and provides economic benefit.

IX. Project Implementation and Management: Applicants must describe proposed project implementation and project management arrangements. Applicants must include descriptions of the expected arrangements for project contracting (Construction, maintenance, and operation), contract oversight and control, change-order management, risk management, and conformance to Federal requirements for project progress reporting.¹⁵

Applicants should include a discussion of qualifications and the factors in 2 CFR 200.206(b); along with the proposed approach to assessing and mitigating project risk.

Applicants should explain how they will fulfill responsibilities that continue after closeout of the award such as use, maintenance and disposition of property acquired or improved under the award, consistent with 2 CFR 200.345 and the FRA grant agreement.

b. Additional Application Elements

Applicants **must** submit form SF 424: Application for Federal Assistance.

Applicants may submit the following additional documents and forms. The Standard Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Forms needed for the electronic application process are available at: Grants.gov.

- i. SF 424A/SF 424C: SF 424A – Budget Information for Non-Construction or SF 424C – Budget Information for Construction.
- ii. SF 424B/SF 424D: SF 424B – Assurances for Non-Construction or SF 424D – Assurances for Construction.
- iii. FRA F30: Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters, Drug-Free Workplace Requirements and Lobbying.¹⁶
- iv. FRA F251: Applicant Financial Capability Questionnaire.¹⁷
- v. SF LLL: Disclosure of Lobbying Activities.

5. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES

a. Address to Request Application Package

To apply for funding under this announcement, all applicants are required to be registered as an organization with Grants.gov.¹⁸

FRA is committed to ensuring that information is available in appropriate alternative formats to meet the requirements of persons who have a disability. If you require an alternative version of files provided, please contact Lou Lorello, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, Federal Railroad Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, D.C., 20590; email: lou.lorello@dot.gov; phone: (202) 440-2563.

¹⁵ See FRA Reports, available at: <https://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P0274>.

¹⁶ <https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/fra-f-30-certifications-regarding-debarment-suspension-and-other-responsibility-matters>.

¹⁷ <https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/fra-f-251>.

¹⁸ Additional information about the registration process is available at: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-registration>.

The Electronic Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC) at the applicant's organization must respond to the registration email from [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov) and login at [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov) to authorize the applicant as the AOR. Please note there can be more than one AOR for an organization.

b. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

To apply for funding applicants must be properly registered in SAM before submitting an application, provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application, and continue to maintain an active SAM registration.

FRA may not make a grant award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable SAM requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Federal awarding agency is ready to make a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant. Late applications, including those that are the result of a failure to register or comply with [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov) applicant requirements in a timely manner, will not be considered. To submit an application through [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov), applicants must follow the directions outlined here: [Discretionary Grants Application Process](#).

c. Submission Instructions

- i. Actions Needed Prior to Applying: Please see SAM instructions as described in Section 5(b) of this notice.¹⁹ If an applicant has trouble at any point during this process, please call the [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov) Customer Center Hotline at 1-800-518-4726.
- ii. Methods for Submitting: Applications must be submitted via [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov). Applicants who do not comply with all submission requirements described in this notice and submit applications through [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov) may not be eligible for award.

Applicants must complete and submit all required documents for the application. FRA welcomes the submission of additional relevant supporting documentation, such as planning, engineering, and design documentation, and letters of support from partnering organizations. Supporting documentation will not count against the project narrative 25-page limit.

For any supporting application materials that an applicant is unable to submit via [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov) (such as oversized engineering drawings), an applicant may submit an original and two (2) copies to Mr. Douglas Gascon, Office of Railroad Development, Federal Railroad Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Room W38-304, Washington, D.C. 20590.

d. Submission Dates and Times

Applicants must submit complete applications to [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov) no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, June 8, 2026.

¹⁹ <https://railroads.dot.gov/grants-loans/discretionary-grants-application-process>

Applicants will receive a system-generated acknowledgement of receipt. FRA reserves the right to modify this deadline. Further, should funding remain after FRA makes selections from the initially submitted applications. FRA also reserves the right to issue a subsequent application deadline for additional application submissions under the terms of this NOFO.

Please use generally accepted formats such as .pdf, .doc, .docx, .xls, .xlsx, and .ppt, when uploading attachments. While applicants may embed picture files, such as .jpg, .gif, and .bmp in document files, applicants should not submit attachments in these formats. Additionally, the following formats will not be accepted: .com, .bat, .exe, .vbs, .cfg, .dat, .db, .dbf, .dll, .ini, .log, .ora, .sys, and .zip.

e. Intergovernmental Review

Intergovernmental Review is required for this program. Applicants must contact their State's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to learn about and comply with their State's process under Executive Order 12372.

6. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

a. Completeness and Eligibility Criteria

FRA will first screen each application for applicant and project eligibility, completeness, and the 20 percent minimum non-Federal cost share. Applications that do not meet these criteria will not proceed to the Evaluation Review Phase.

b. Evaluation Criteria

FRA will evaluate all eligible and complete applications using the evaluation merit criteria outlined in this section to determine project readiness, technical merit, and project benefits.

- i. Project Readiness: In evaluating Project Readiness, FRA will evaluate project and applicant risk based on the applicant's preparedness and capacity to implement the proposed project, including whether the applicant is reasonably equipped to begin the Capital or Planning Project in a timely manner to meet its proposed schedule, including coordination with impacted railroads. FRA will evaluate whether the applicant is able to meet project milestones and use Federal funds efficiently to deliver the proposed project.²⁰

FRA will evaluate application information for the degree to which –

- A. The application demonstrates strong project readiness, evidenced by status of required NEPA actions and environmental permitting readiness (if applicable);
- B. The status and timeline of agreements, such as an agreement required under 49 U.S.C. § 22905(c)(1), necessary for the legal, financial, and technical capacity to complete the project as proposed and 49 U.S.C. § 22909(e)(2),

²⁰ Additional information on USDOT's Project Readiness checklist can be found here: <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/dot-navigator/project-readiness-checklist-dot-discretionary-grant-applicants>.

necessary for approvals from impacted rail carriers and real property owners, are sufficiently developed;

- C. The application identifies the appropriate Lifecycle Stage(s) for the proposed project, demonstrates that the project has completed or will complete any preceding Lifecycle Stage(s), and the project is able to complete all requirements of the identified Lifecycle Stage(s); and
 - D. Project partner coordination and commitments, including letters of support, agreements, and funding, are secured or able to be secured without undue delay.
- ii. Technical Merit: In evaluating Technical Merit, FRA will evaluate the degree to which the application (inclusive of all submitted materials) is reasonable and appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes, necessary resources and workforce are committed to deliver the project, and the proposed project elements are appropriate for the project funding request. FRA will also consider applicant risk, including the applicant's past performance in developing and delivering similar projects.

FRA will evaluate application information for the degree to which –

- A. The technical qualifications and experience of key personnel the applicant proposes to lead and perform the technical efforts, including the qualifications of the primary and supporting organizations, demonstrate the ability to fully and successfully execute the proposed project within the proposed time frame and budget;
 - B. The applicant and project deploy innovative technology, encourage innovative approaches to project delivery, and incentivize the use of innovative financing;
 - C. The applicant has or will have the legal, financial, and technical capacity to carry out the proposed project;
 - D. The application demonstrates strong project readiness and ability to meet the Crossing Safety Program requirements; and
 - E. The degree to which the application proposes improvements to the safety and mobility of people and goods at grade crossings.
- iii. Project Benefits: Consistent with statute, FRA will evaluate the extent to which proposed projects would:
- A. Improve safety at highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossings;
 - B. Grade separate, eliminate, or close highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossings;
 - C. Improve the mobility of people and goods;
 - D. Reduce emissions, protect the environment, and provide community benefits, including noise reduction;
 - E. Improve access to emergency services;
 - F. Provide economic benefits;
 - G. Improve access to communities separated by rail crossings; and

H. Address additional considerations:

1. The proposed project will use innovative technologies; innovative design and construction techniques; or construction materials that reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
2. The applicant's planned use of contracting incentives employs local labor, to the extent permissible under Federal law;
3. The proposed project will improve the mobility of multiple modes of transportation, including ingress and egress from freight facilities; or users of nonvehicular modes of transportation, such as pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transportation;
4. The project is identified in the freight investment plan component of a State freight plan, a State rail plan prepared in accordance with chapter 227 of title 49, a State highway-rail grade crossing action plan; and
5. The project will use financial support from impacted rail carriers.

For each of the merit criteria, FRA will use rubric ratings with applied criteria to evaluate whether the applications meet the defined thresholds.²¹

FRA will also apply the selection preferences described in Section 6(c) of this notice.

c. Selection Preferences

After completing the merit review, FRA will give preference to eligible projects in the following circumstances:

- i. Result in one or more grade separated crossings;
- ii. Close grade crossings through Track Relocation;
- iii. Result in corridor-wide grade crossing improvements;²²
- iv. Projects including the Final Design and Construction lifecycle stages according to FRA's [Railroad Capital Project Guidance](#); or
- v. Existing Crossing Safety Program projects that have completed or will complete an earlier lifecycle stage from a prior round of the Crossing Safety Program.

FRA is interested in supporting projects that result in a reduction or elimination of blocked crossings. Applicants should describe blocked crossing challenges and metrics in their applications and demonstrate how their project will address community mobility and safety issues by improving access to communities separated by rail crossings, reducing emergency service response times, and addressing quality of life concerns.

In addition, FRA is interested in supporting projects that align with the Administration's focus on the American family and ensuring safe and efficient travel for American families.

²¹ <https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/crossing-safety-program-rce-evaluation-rubrics>

²² FRA considers corridor-wide grade crossing improvements to be projects that directly improve a series of linked, consecutive grade crossings.

FRA is interested in prioritizing improvement of the condition and safety of transportation infrastructure at grade crossings with high impact to the safe movement of people and goods

FRA is interested in projects that promote economic competitiveness by advancing the Nation's domestic energy sector, in accordance with E.O. 14154 (Unleashing American Energy), improve intermodal or multimodal freight mobility, or support the growth and expansion of American manufacturing.

FRA is interested in projects that Advance the Department's Innovation Agenda to usher in the golden age of transportation through American innovation; including projects that use technology to support more efficient freight operating practices, or projects that create opportunities to develop and conduct responsible early deployments of innovative and emerging transportation technologies.

d. Review and Selection Process

Applications are first screened for applicant and project eligibility, completeness, and minimum cost share. Remaining applications are evaluated against the project readiness criteria, technical merit criteria, and project benefits criteria. All rated applications are then reviewed by a Steering Committee and Senior Review Team, who select awards for review and approval by the Secretary or his designee.

e. Risk Review

Before making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold of \$250,000 (see 2 CFR 200.1 and 48 CFR 2.101 for definition of Simplified Acquisition Threshold), FRA will review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)). See 41 U.S.C. § 2313.

An applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.

FRA will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR 200.205.

7. AWARD NOTICES

a. Federal Award Notices

FRA will announce applications selected for funding on FRA's website after the application review period. This announcement is FRA's notification to successful and unsuccessful applicants alike. FRA will contact the point of contact listed in the SF 424 to initiate negotiation of a project-specific grant agreement. This notification is not a commitment by FRA or an authorization to begin proposed project activities. FRA requires satisfaction of applicable requirements by the applicant and a formal agreement signed by both the recipient and FRA,

including FRA's Standard Terms and Conditions and an approved scope, schedule, and budget, before obligating the grant. Prior to execution of a grant agreement, FRA reserves the right to withdraw or modify any selection. Unsuccessful applicants may request an application debrief after selections are announced.

b. Pre-Award Funding Restrictions

Applicants may count costs incurred for Preliminary Engineering associated with Highway-Rail Grade Crossing and Pathway-Rail Grade Crossing Improvement Projects as part of the total project costs. Such costs are eligible as non-Federal share or for reimbursement, even if they were incurred before project selection for award, consistent with 49 U.S.C. § 22909(g). Such costs must have been incurred no earlier than November 15, 2021, and must be otherwise compliant with 2 CFR part 200 and the requirements of this Crossing Safety Program.

8. POST AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION

a. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Recipients of funds must comply with all applicable requirements of Federal law, including, without limitation, the Constitution of the United States; the conditions of performance, nondiscrimination requirements, and other assurances made applicable to the award of funds in accordance with DOT regulations; and applicable Federal financial assistance and contracting principles promulgated by the OMB. Unless otherwise stated in statutory or legislative authority, or appropriations language, all financial assistance awards follow the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 CFR part 200 and 2 CFR part 1201. If DOT determines that a recipient has failed to comply with applicable Federal requirements, DOT may terminate the award of funds and disallow previously incurred costs, requiring the recipient to reimburse any expended award funds.

Assistance under this NOFO is subject to the grant conditions in 49 U.S.C. § 22905.²³

b. Reporting

- i. Progress Reporting on Grant Activity: Each applicant selected for a grant will be required to comply with all standard FRA reporting requirements. Pursuant to 2 CFR 170.210, non-Federal entities applying under this NOFO must have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the reporting requirements should they receive Federal funding.
- ii. Additional Reporting: Applicants selected for funding are required to comply with all reporting requirements in the standard terms and conditions for FRA grant awards including 2 CFR 180.335 and 2 CFR 180.350. If the total value of a selected applicant's currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds \$10,000,000 for any period of time during

²³ More information on labor protections can be found here: <https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/equivalent-labor-protections>. More information on 22905(c)(1) agreements can be found here: <https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/frequently-asked-questions-about-rail-improvement-grant-conditions-under-49-usc-ss-22905c1>. More information on FRA Buy American requirements can be found here: <https://railroads.dot.gov/legislation-regulations/buy-america/buy-america>

the period of performance of this Federal award, then the applicant must maintain the information reported to SAM and ensure that is made available in the designated integrity and performance system (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)) about civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings described in award term and conditions of Article 3. This is a statutory requirement under Section 872 of Pub. L. 110–417, as amended (41 U.S.C. § 2313). As required by Section 3010 of Public Law 111–212, all information posted in the designated integrity and performance system on or after April 15, 2011, except past performance reviews required for Federal procurement contracts, will be publicly available.

- iii. Performance Reporting: If selected, recipients will be required to collect information and report on the project’s performance using measures mutually agreed upon by FRA and the recipient to assess progress in achieving strategic goals and objectives.
- iv. DOT/FRA Program Evaluation: Program Evaluation is an assessment using systematic data collection and analysis of one or more programs, policies, and organizations intended to assess their effectiveness and efficiency (5 U.S.C. § 311). Recipients and subrecipients are encouraged to incorporate program evaluation including associated data collection activities from the outset of their program design and implementation to meaningfully document and measure their progress. Allowable data and evaluation costs are specified in 2 CFR 200.455(c). As a condition of grant award, recipient may be required to participate in an evaluation undertaken by DOT, or another agency or partner. As a condition of award, recipients must agree to: (1) make records available to the evaluation official; (2) provide access to program records, and any other relevant documents to calculate costs and benefits; (3) in the case of an impact analysis, facilitate the access to relevant information as requested; and (4) follow evaluation procedures as specified by the evaluation official. Evaluation expenses are allowable costs (either as direct or indirect) unless prohibited by statute or regulation. (2 CFR part 200).

c. Data Sharing Requirements

As a condition of funding, grant recipients are required to share safety and technology-related data, if produced under the grant awards with FRA, following agreed-upon timelines to support safety assessment. Consistent with 2 CFR 200.315, grant recipients must ensure that FRA has access to safety and technology-related data generated under the award in a machine-readable format.

It is the policy of the United States to strengthen the security and resilience of its critical infrastructure against all hazards, including physical and cyber risks, consistent with National Security Memorandum (NSM-22) on Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience, and the National Security Memorandum on Improving Cybersecurity for Critical Infrastructure Control Systems. Each applicant selected for Federal funding must demonstrate, prior to the signing of the grant agreement, effort to consider and address physical and cyber security risks relevant to the transportation mode and type and scale of the project. Projects that have not appropriately considered and addressed physical and cyber security and resilience in their planning, design,

and project oversight, as determined by the DOT and the Department of Homeland Security, will be required to do so before receiving funds.

d. Domestic Preference Requirements

Funds made available under this notice are subject to the domestic preference requirement in 49 U.S.C. § 22905(a) (FRA Buy America) and the Build America, Buy America Act, Pub. L. No. 117-58, sections 70901-52. Major Capital Project applicants should include a domestic sourcing plan that provides details on the extent to which the materials covered by the plan are to be imported and the extent to which such materials can be sourced domestically. If applicants anticipate the need for a waiver of FRA's Buy America requirements for a Major Capital Project, applicants should request a waiver in the domestic sourcing plan.

e. Federal Anti-Discrimination

Except where prohibited by court order, pursuant to Executive Order 14173, Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity, as a condition of grant award, each Recipient must agree that its and its regulations' compliance in all respects with the equal protection principles of the U.S. Constitution and all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws and regulations is material to the government's payment decisions for purposes of section 3729(b)(4) of title 31, United States Code.

Except where prohibited by court order, pursuant to Executive Order 14173, Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity, as a condition of grant award, each Recipient must certify that it does not operate any programs promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives that violate the U.S. Constitution or any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws.

f. Compliance with Federal Law and Policies

Except where prohibited by court order: The applicant assures and certifies, with respect to any application and awarded Project under this NOFO, that it will comply with all applicable Federal laws, regulations, executive orders, policies, guidelines, and requirements as they relate to the application, acceptance, and use of Federal funds.

To the extent a court order bars the implementation or enforcement of one or more of these conditions or requirements with respect to a particular applicant or recipient, the Department will not implement or enforce the relevant condition(s) or requirement(s) against that applicant or recipient for as long as the order remains in place.

9. OTHER INFORMATION

All information submitted as part of or in support of any application shall use publicly available data or data that can be made public and methodologies that are accepted by industry practice and standards, to the extent possible. While the Crossing Safety Program does not require a benefit-cost analysis, FRA encourages adherence to DOT Order 2100.7 regarding sound economic analysis and other benefits of projects. If the application includes information the applicant considers to be a trade secret or confidential commercial or financial information, the applicant should do the following: (1) note on the front cover that the submission "Contains Confidential Business Information (CBI)"; (2) mark each affected page "CBI"; and (3) highlight or otherwise denote the CBI portions.

The DOT regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) are found at 49 CFR part 7 subpart C – Availability of Reasonably Described Records under the Freedom of Information Act which sets forth rules for FRA to make requested materials, information, and records publicly available under FOIA. Unless prohibited by law and to the extent permitted under the FOIA, contents of application and proposals submitted by successful applicants may be released in response to FOIA requests. The Department may share application information within the Department or with other Federal agencies if the Department determines that sharing is relevant to the respective program’s objectives.

The following links contain additional information for applicants:

- Crossing Safety Program Page: <https://railroads.dot.gov/grants-loans/crossing-safety-program>
- Railroad Capital Project Guidance: <https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/fra-guidance-development-and-implementation-railroad-capital-projects>
- FRA Grant Application Guide: <https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/fra-grant-application-guide>
- FRA Key Terms for Discretionary Grant Programs: <https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/definitions-key-terms-discretionary-grant-programs>

Issued in Washington, D.C.



David A. Fink
Administrator