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U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**



FHWA Grant Life Cycle

The 2026 Spring Conference
County Engineers Association of Maryland
May 6-8th, 2026

Disclaimer

Except for the statutes and regulations cited, the contents of this presentation do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the States or the public in any way. This presentation is intended only to provide information regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

FHWA is the source of all images in this presentation unless otherwise indicated.

Overview

- Application
- Pre-Award
- Post Award Administration
- Close-Out

**Cradle to Grave
Grant Lifecycle**

Pulse Check

Raise Your Hand if:

You have never been a part of a team that administered a Federal Aid Implementation, Construction or Demonstration Grant from FHWA

A Federal Aid Implementation, Construction or Demonstration Grant

A Federal Aid Planning Grant

Awarded a Federal Aid Grant

Submitted a Federal Aid Grant application



Image generated by Google Gemini

MARYLAND GRANTS

Total

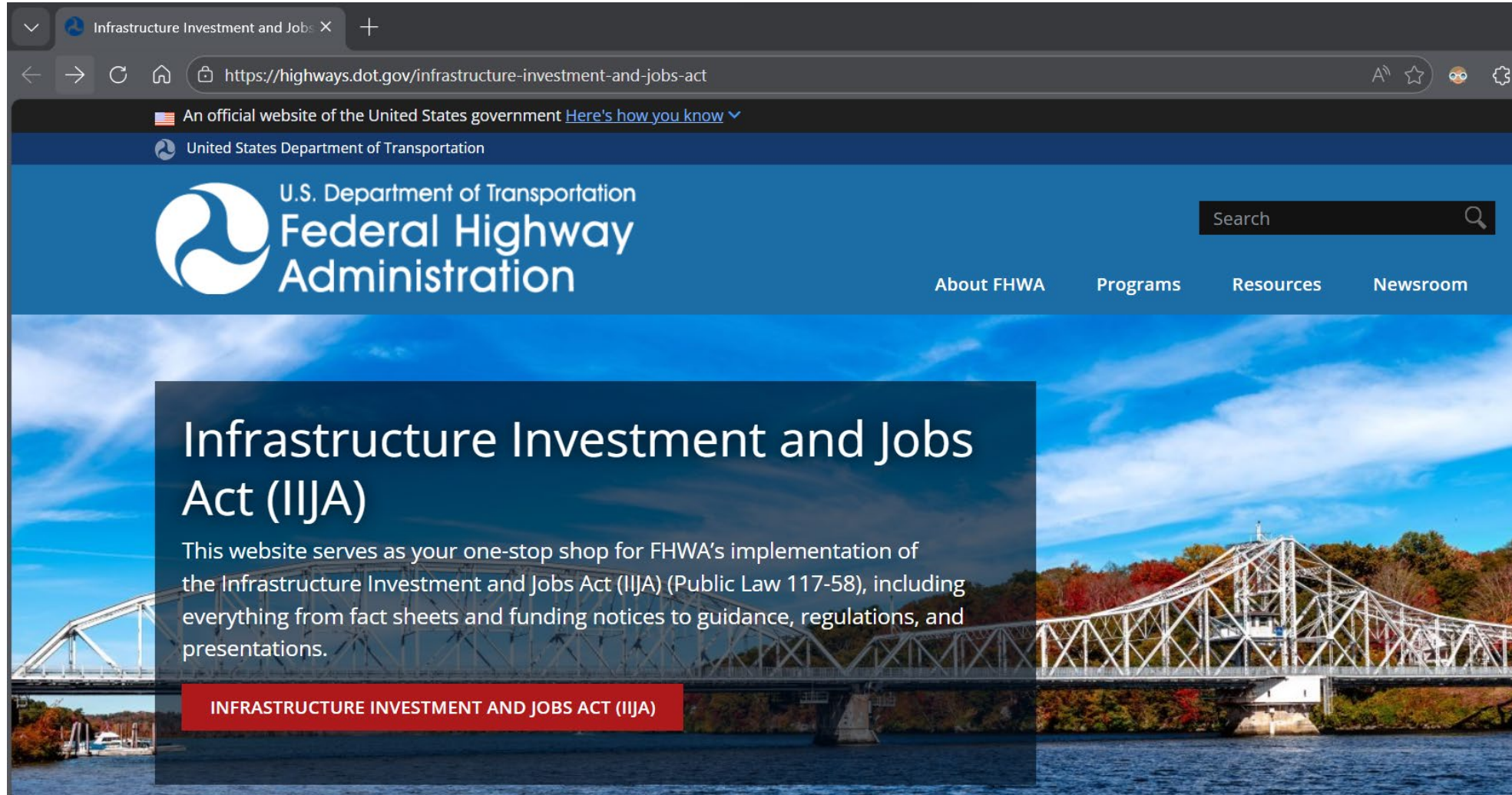


Local



SS4A





[IIJA- FHWA | Federal Highway Administration \(dot.gov\)](https://highways.dot.gov/infrastructure-investment-and-jobs-act)

DISCLAIMER

Due to the **COMPETITIVE** nature of grants, the *Maryland Division Office* cannot provide potential recipients with an unfair advantage in the preparation of a grant application.

Application

What is a NOFO?

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Where do I find them?

Grants.gov OR USDOT Navigator Website

How do I get in?

Register at Sam.gov, then Grants.gov

Station 1: Administrative Readiness and the Pre-Award Countdown

T-Minus 8 Weeks
SAM.gov Registration
Register for a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).
Warning: This process takes 1 to 4 weeks.



T-Minus 4 Weeks
Grants.gov Registration
Create an organization profile to submit the application.
Warning: This takes 2 to 4 weeks.



T-Minus 0

The NOFO

The Notice of Funding Opportunity is your definitive guide.

Application Success Strategy

Coordinate early between your local finance, procurement, and public works departments to align on match requirements and project readiness.

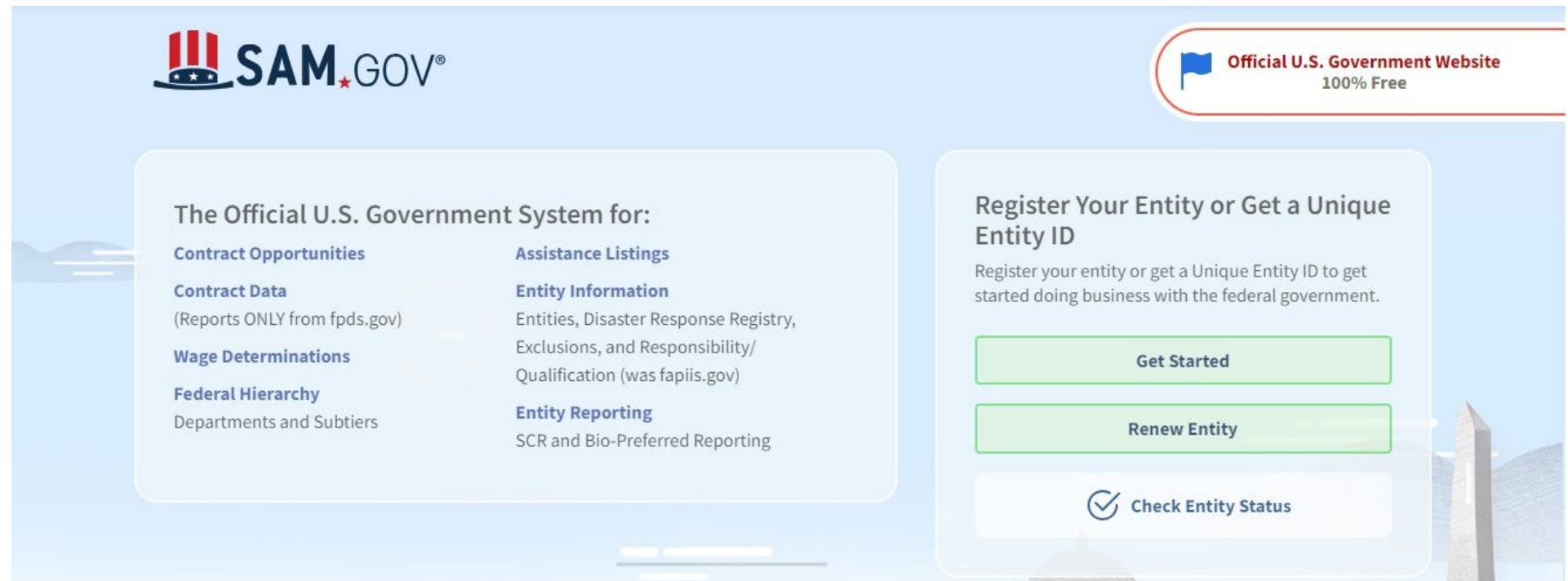
Application

Obtain UNIQUE ENTITY IDENTIFIER (UEI) from the System for Award management

<https://sam.gov/>



Image generated by Google Gemini

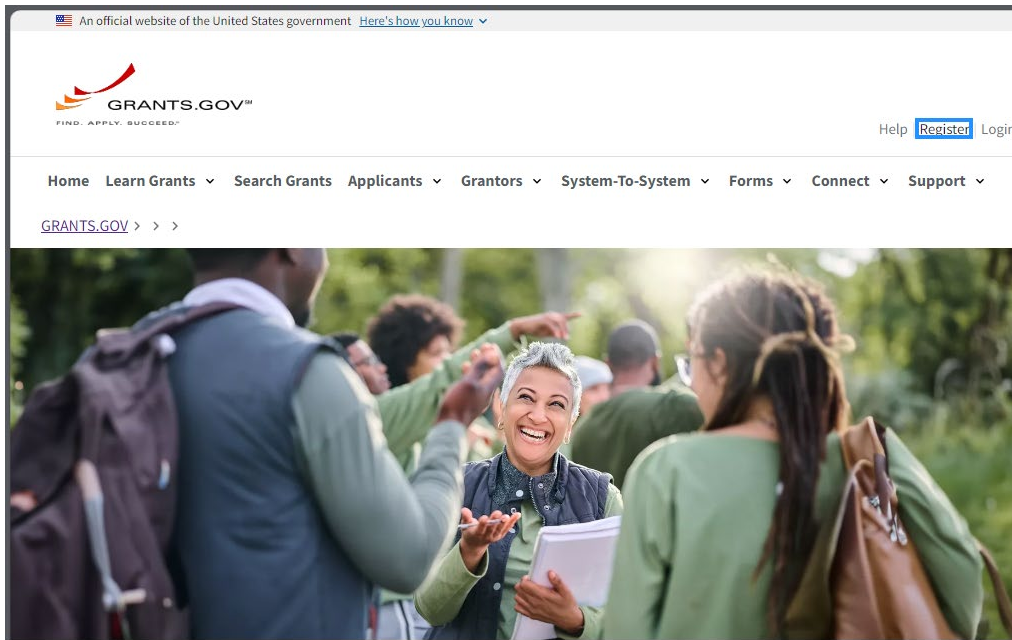
A screenshot of the SAM.GOV website homepage. The header features the SAM.GOV logo and a badge stating 'Official U.S. Government Website 100% Free'. The main content is divided into two columns. The left column lists services: 'The Official U.S. Government System for: Contract Opportunities', 'Contract Data (Reports ONLY from fpds.gov)', 'Wage Determinations', 'Federal Hierarchy Departments and Subtiers', 'Assistance Listings', 'Entity Information Entities, Disaster Response Registry, Exclusions, and Responsibility/Qualification (was fapiis.gov)', and 'Entity Reporting SCR and Bio-Preferred Reporting'. The right column is titled 'Register Your Entity or Get a Unique Entity ID' and includes the text 'Register your entity or get a Unique Entity ID to get started doing business with the federal government.' Below this are three buttons: 'Get Started', 'Renew Entity', and 'Check Entity Status'.

Application

Register at Grants.gov

<https://www.grants.gov/register.html>

2 – 4 weeks



FHWA Maryland Division Office

REGISTER

Registering with Grants.gov

One account to manage all your profiles, applications, and subscriptions.

Applicants

1. Complete the **required form fields**.
2. **Confirm** your email address.
3. **Add** an organization applicant profile or an individual applicant profile after registering.

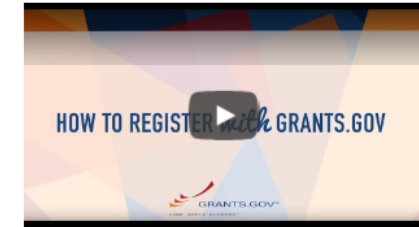
Learn more on the [Applicant Registration page](#).

Grantors

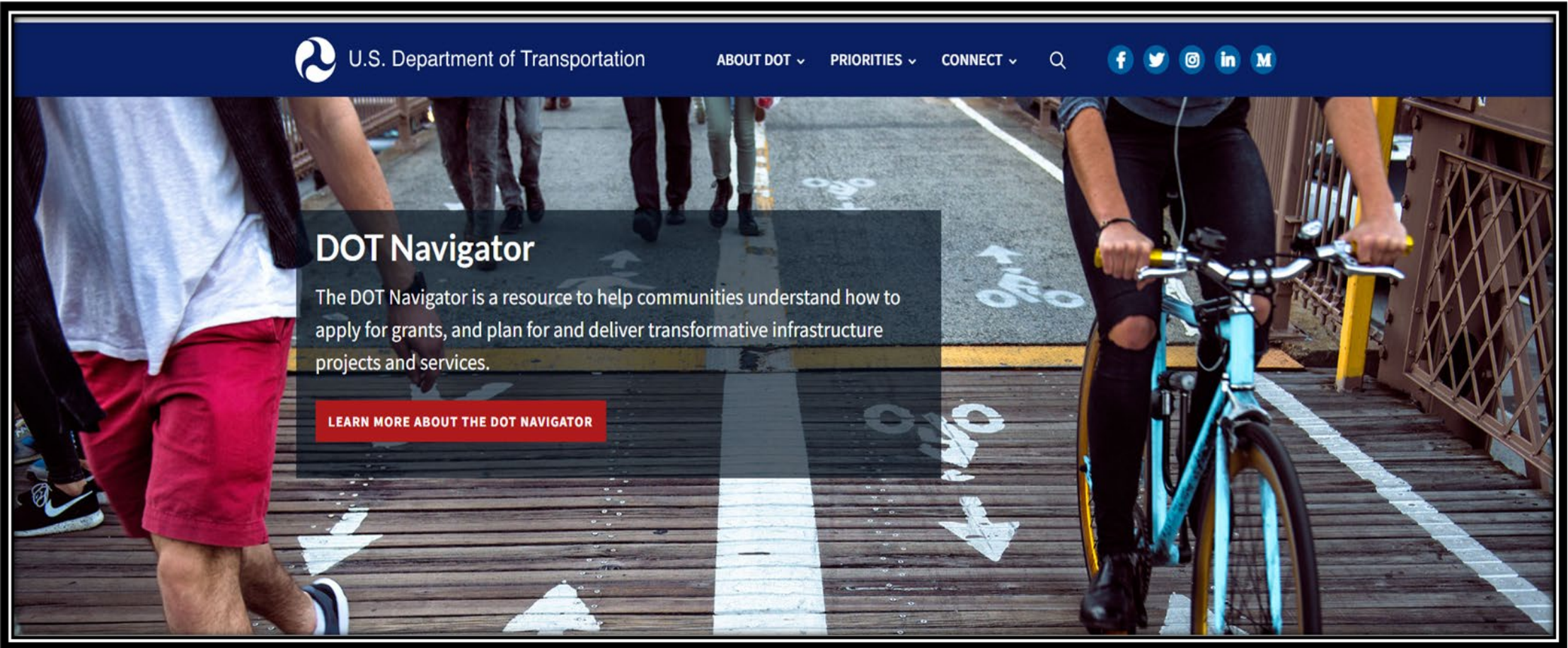
1. Complete the **required form fields**.
2. **Confirm** your email address.
3. Ask your **agency point of contact** to associate your email address with the agency.

Learn more on the [Grantor Registration page](#).

[Get Registered Now](#)

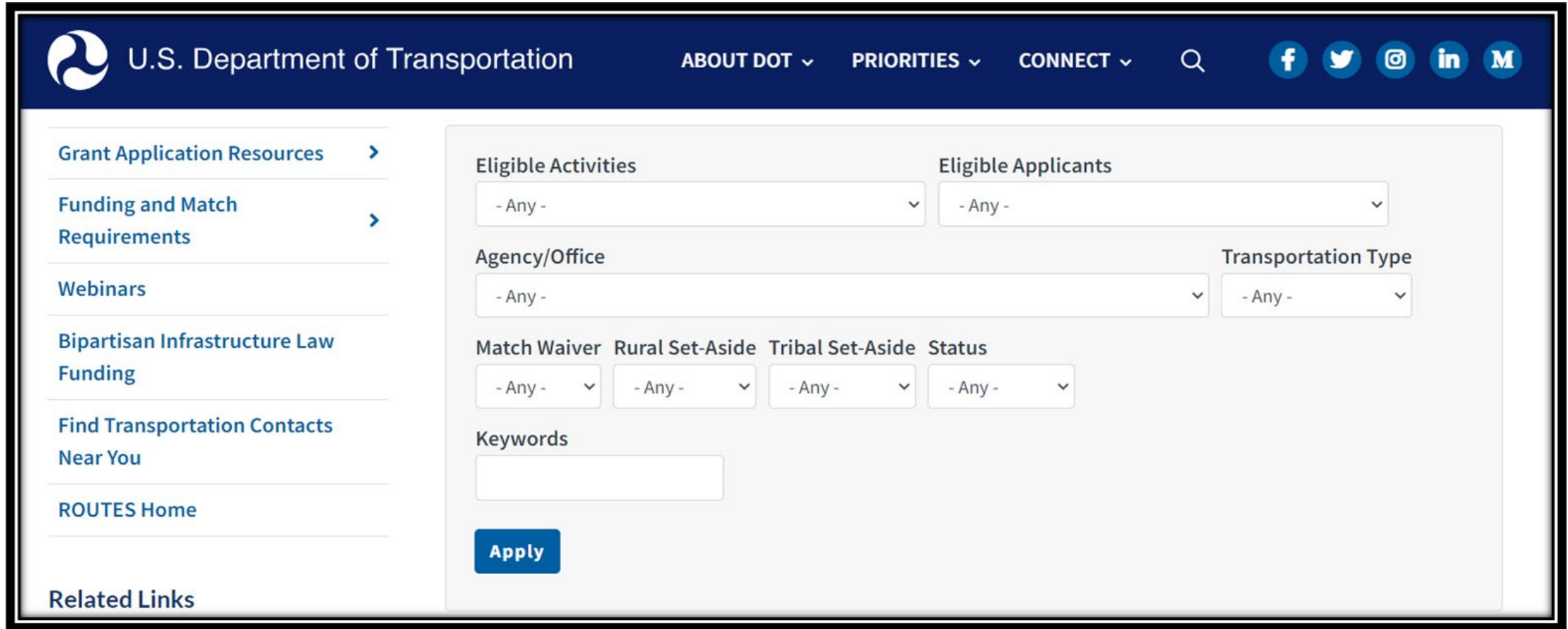


Application



<https://www.transportation.gov/dot-navigator>

Application



The screenshot shows the U.S. Department of Transportation Grants Dashboard. The header includes the DOT logo, the text "U.S. Department of Transportation", and navigation links for "ABOUT DOT", "PRIORITIES", and "CONNECT". Social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and My (M) are also present. The main content area is divided into a left sidebar and a central filter panel. The sidebar contains links for "Grant Application Resources", "Funding and Match Requirements", "Webinars", "Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funding", "Find Transportation Contacts Near You", and "ROUTES Home". The filter panel includes dropdown menus for "Eligible Activities", "Eligible Applicants", "Agency/Office", and "Transportation Type". It also features checkboxes for "Match Waiver", "Rural Set-Aside", "Tribal Set-Aside", and "Status", each with a "- Any -" dropdown. A "Keywords" text input field and an "Apply" button are located at the bottom of the filter panel.

U.S. Department of Transportation

ABOUT DOT ▾ PRIORITIES ▾ CONNECT ▾

Grant Application Resources >

Funding and Match Requirements >

Webinars

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funding

Find Transportation Contacts Near You

ROUTES Home

Related Links

Eligible Activities: - Any - ▾

Eligible Applicants: - Any - ▾

Agency/Office: - Any - ▾

Transportation Type: - Any - ▾

Match Waiver: - Any - ▾

Rural Set-Aside: - Any - ▾

Tribal Set-Aside: - Any - ▾

Status: - Any - ▾

Keywords:

Apply

<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/dashboard>

Application



Federal Transportation Funding: Fiscal Year 2023 Discretionary Grant Preparation Checklist for Prospective Applicants

Over \$32 billion is available to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) in new fiscal year 2023 Budget Authority to provide competitive grant funding to local governments, metropolitan planning organizations, transit agencies, Tribal governments, U.S. Territories, and state departments of transportation. Some grant programs created in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) are also available to non-profit organizations, academic institutions, and private businesses that are doing work to advance community infrastructure projects, improve safety and economic development, or help to transition to a clean energy and more climate resilient future.

This checklist was created by DOT to help local governments prepare for the year ahead and chart a strategic pathway to take advantage of these historic infrastructure investments to build good projects well. Except for any statutes and regulations cited, the contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind prospective applicants or the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

Preparation Tips for FY 2023 DOT Grant Application Success

- 1. Coordinate Between Agencies and Stakeholders.** Within your local government, ensure that finance, procurement, planning, and public works departments are working in alignment to submit grant applications, successfully execute grant agreements, and deliver projects. This requires early and continuous coordination between local government and community stakeholders and with regional and state or other third-party implementation partners to ensure that projects are set up for success.
- 2. Get Familiar with the [DOT Calendar of Funding Opportunities](#)** to see when different programs will be open and closed for applications.
 - Review NOFOs carefully. Each program's Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) typically provides additional resources, webinars, and frequently asked questions specific to that program to provide information on program eligibility, grant application requirements, and other useful information. The program page may also contain information on past grant recipients to help better understand the types of projects and applications selected for funding in previous years.
 - Prioritize and align projects and applications. It may not serve your community well to submit multiple applications for a single Notice of Funding Opportunity such that you are competing against yourself. Think about which projects may be the readiest for funding, which may be the highest priority based on locally defined needs, or which may be the best fit for Federal funding versus other types of local or state funding.
 - Check out the [ROUTES Applicant Toolkit for Competitive Funding Programs at USDOT](#). Created for rural applicants, this toolkit is useful to any organization unfamiliar with the DOT grant process.

1

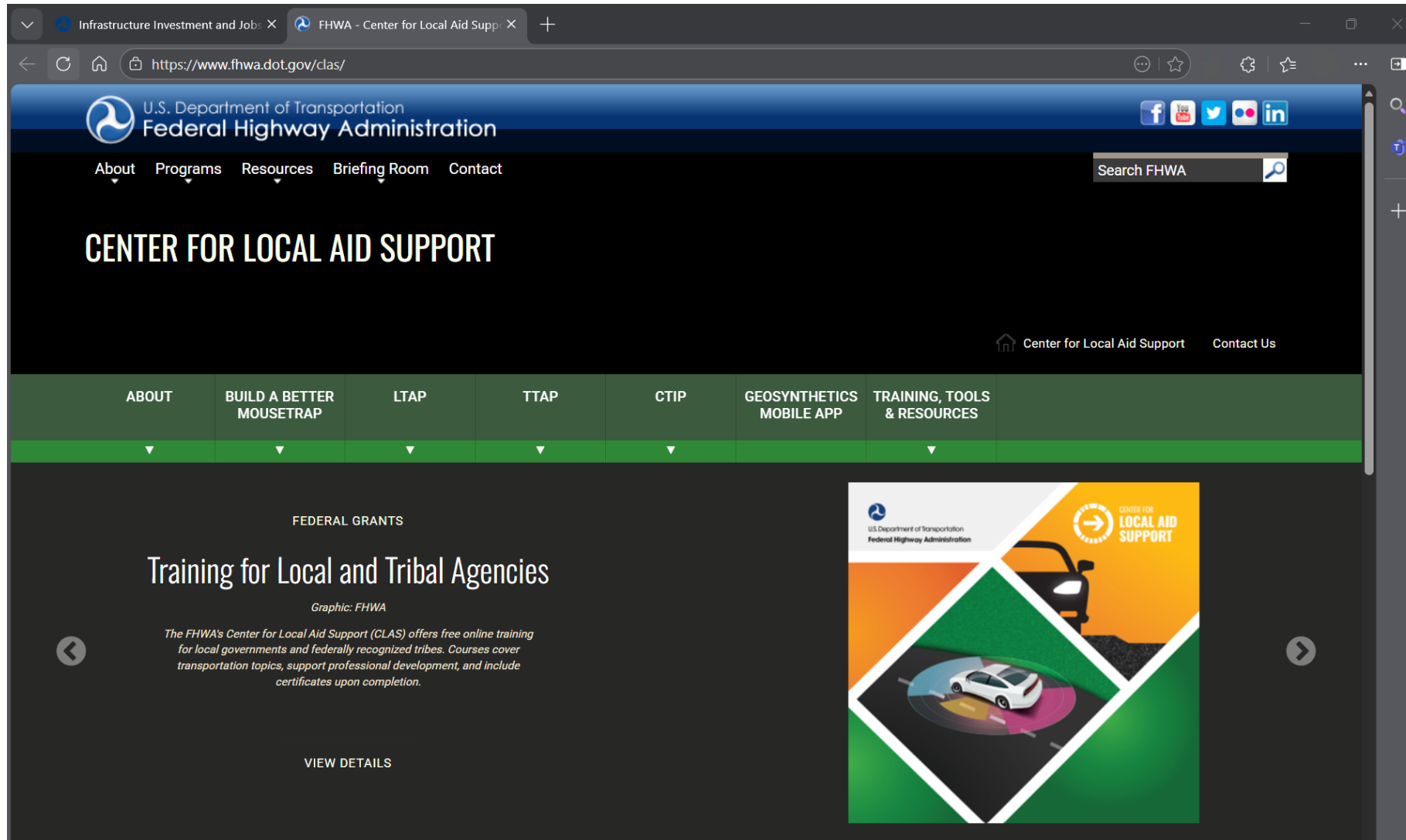


Image generated by Google Gemini

CHECKLIST to help
with preparing the
grant application

<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/dot-navigator/fy-2023-discretionary-grant-preparation-checklist-pdf>

Application



Tips

1. Coordinate Between Agencies and Stakeholders
2. Budget for and Secure Your Non-Federal Match
<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/dot-navigator/understanding-non-federal-match-requirements>
3. Ensure Your Project Is on the TIP/STIP*
Maryland STIP - <https://www.mdot.maryland.gov/tso/pages/Index.aspx?PageId=117>
4. Get Ready to Apply for and Administer Federal Funding
<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/dot-navigator/federal-funding-right-fit-my-organization>
5. Prepare Your Capital Project's Benefit-Cost Analysis
<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/dot-navigator/what-is-a-benefit-cost-analysis>

*Most Grant Programs

6. Budget for Meaningful Public Involvement [PROMISING PRACTICES FOR MEANINGFUL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN TRANSPORTATION DECISION-MAKING](#)
7. Build a Strong Workforce Development and Labor Plan [Grant Application Checklist for a Strong Transportation Workforce and Labor Plan \(PDF\) | US Department of Transportation](#)
8. Understand NEPA and Other Federal Requirements as You Consider Whether to Seek Funding
 - NEPA https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/nepa/nepa_projDev.aspx
 - Title VI <https://www.transportation.gov/mission/civil-rights/civil-rights-awareness-enforcement/dot-title-vi-fact-sheet>
 - ADA [ADA Standards for Accessible Design | ADA.gov](#)
 - Davis Bacon Act <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/construction/cqit/dbacon.cfm>
 - Buy America <https://www.transportation.gov/office-policy/transportation-policy/made-in-america>
 - ROW [Local Public Agencies - Real Estate - FHWA](#)

Most NOFOs follow a standard structure (described in [2 CFR 200.204](#)) that includes:

The Goal: What exactly is the government trying to achieve with this money?

Eligibility: Who can apply? (e.g., Non-profits only? Small businesses? State governments?)

Funding Details: How much money is available in total, and what is the maximum/minimum amount for a single award?

Deadlines: When is the application due? Are there statutory obligation and expenditure deadlines?

The "Scoring Rubric": How will the reviewers grade your application? This is the merits. How does your project fit FHWA's priorities? (This is the most important part to read multiple times!)

Compliance Rules: Specific font sizes, page limits, and required attachments. Know which supplemental forms are to be submitted.

Pre-Award: Decoding the NOFO



Read the Roadmap: The NOFO dictates exact merit criteria, deadlines, and cost-share rules —treat it as your legal blueprint.

Classify the Work:
Distinctly categorize
your initiative.

**Non-Construction
(Planning/Studies)**

**Construction
(Physical Building)**

BUDGET INFORMATION - Non Construction Programs

Funding Program	Activity within Annual Allocation		Estimated Construction		Other Budget Budget		Total
	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
TOTAL							

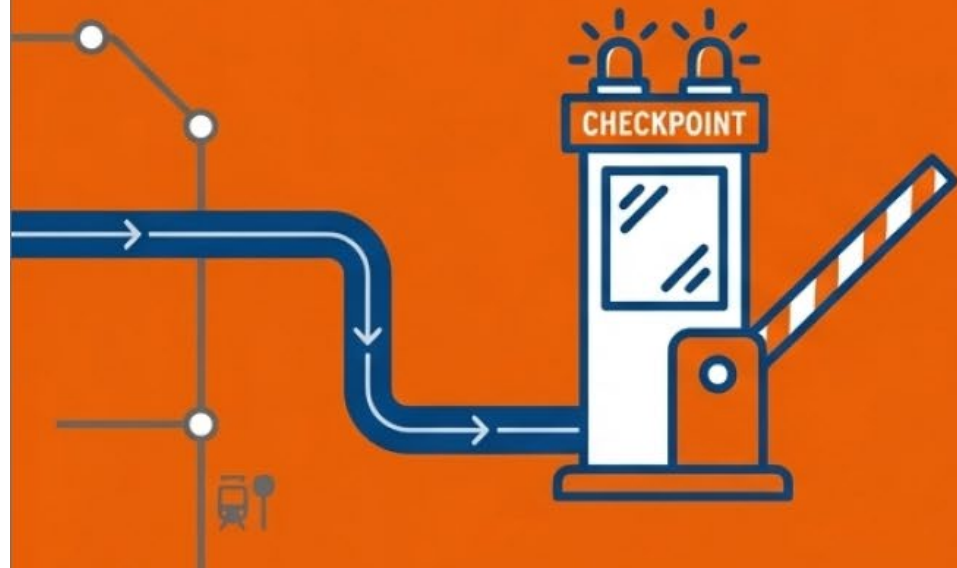
SF-424A

BUDGET INFORMATION - Construction Programs

Activity	Total Cost		Funding Sources		Total
	NO	YES	Federal	Other	
1. Administration and management					
2. Land acquisition (right-of-way, easements, etc.)					
3. Resident approval and permits					
4. Architectural and engineering fees					
5. Plans, specifications and engineering fees					
6. Professional fees					
7. Site work					
8. Demolition and removal					
9. Construction					
10. Equipment					
11. Mobilization					
12. Self-help (open unless if FV)					
13. Construction					
14. Self-help					
15. Project management					
16. TOTAL PROJECT COSTS (sum of 1-15)					

SF-424C

How many times should you read the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) before submitting your application?



A) Once, to get the gist.

B) Twice, to check the deadlines.

C) Three times, minimum.

Read the NOFO
Read the NOFO
Read the NOFO



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How many times should you read the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) before submitting your application?

- a) Once
- b) Twice
- c) Three
- d) As much as possible to fully understand the grant requirements and merit criteria

Pre-Award

You received notice that your project has been selected for an award.

Now What?

When can I start?

Pre-Award

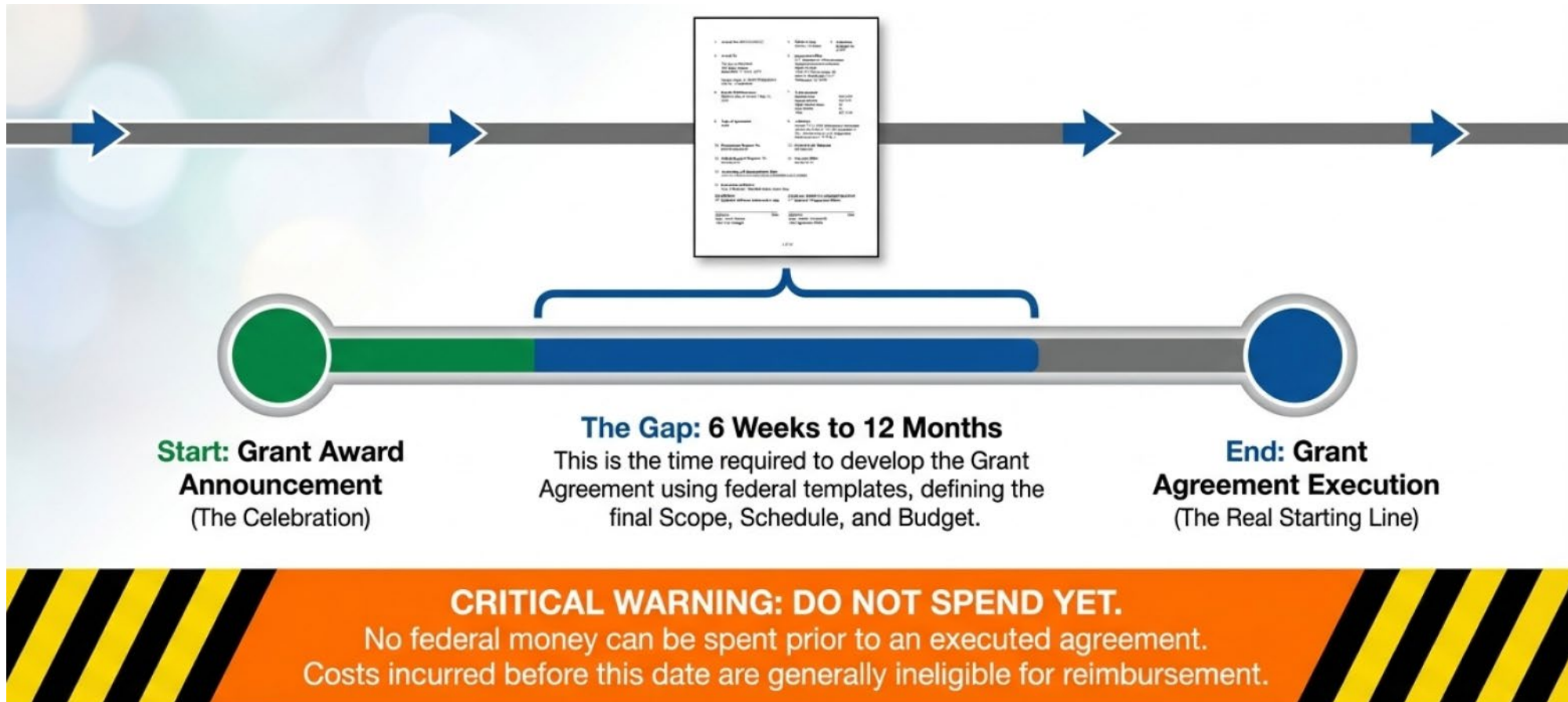
- Kick-Off Meeting
- Grant Agreement Execution
- Division Office Coordination

Pre-Award

Kick-Off Meeting

- Division or Program Office will schedule
- Introduction of POCs and Team Members
- Grant Agreement Documents will be shared
- Additional Resources Provided

Grant Agreement Execution

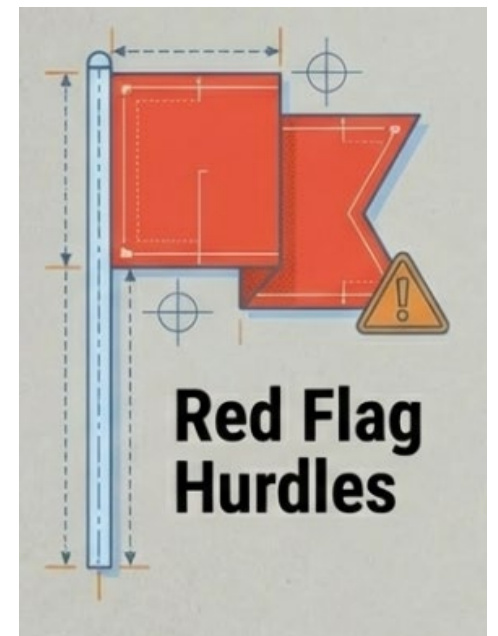


Division Office Coordination

- Dependent on Grant Scope
 - Construction only grants will require more coordination. (i.e. NEPA, ROW, RR, etc)
- Establishing Signatories and Team
- Getting Access to Federal Systems
- General guidance

Project Readiness

- Is coordination required before construction?
- Are Consultant contracts necessary?
- Check TIP/STIP Calendars & Timelines.
- Are there utility or railroad impacts?
- Are their special terms in the agreement or the NOFO?



Read the NOFO
Read the NOFO
Read the NOFO



Image generated by Google Gemini

Post-Award

You have a fully executed grant agreement

Now What?

When can I start?

Post-Award

The Partnership: Who Does What?



NEPA

- All grant programs will require NEPA clearance prior to execution of the grant agreement.
- Some grants may be obligated in phases.
- Some grants may be given a Programmatic Categorical Exclusion

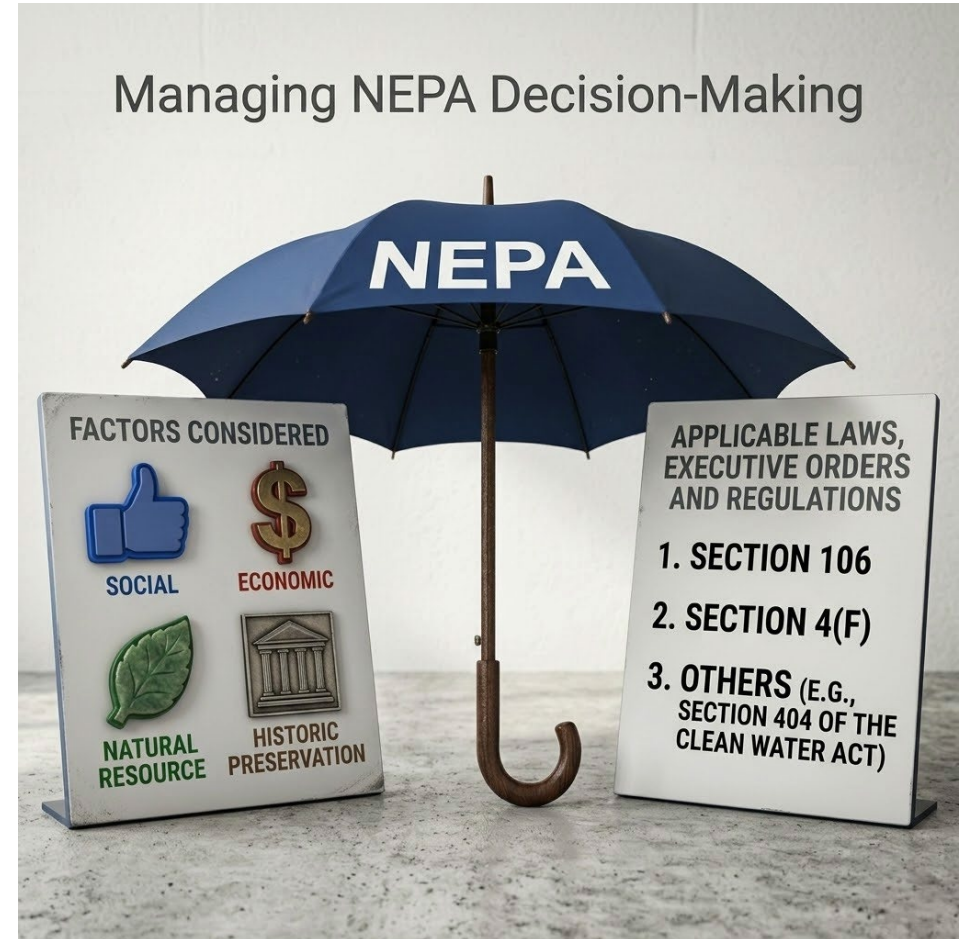
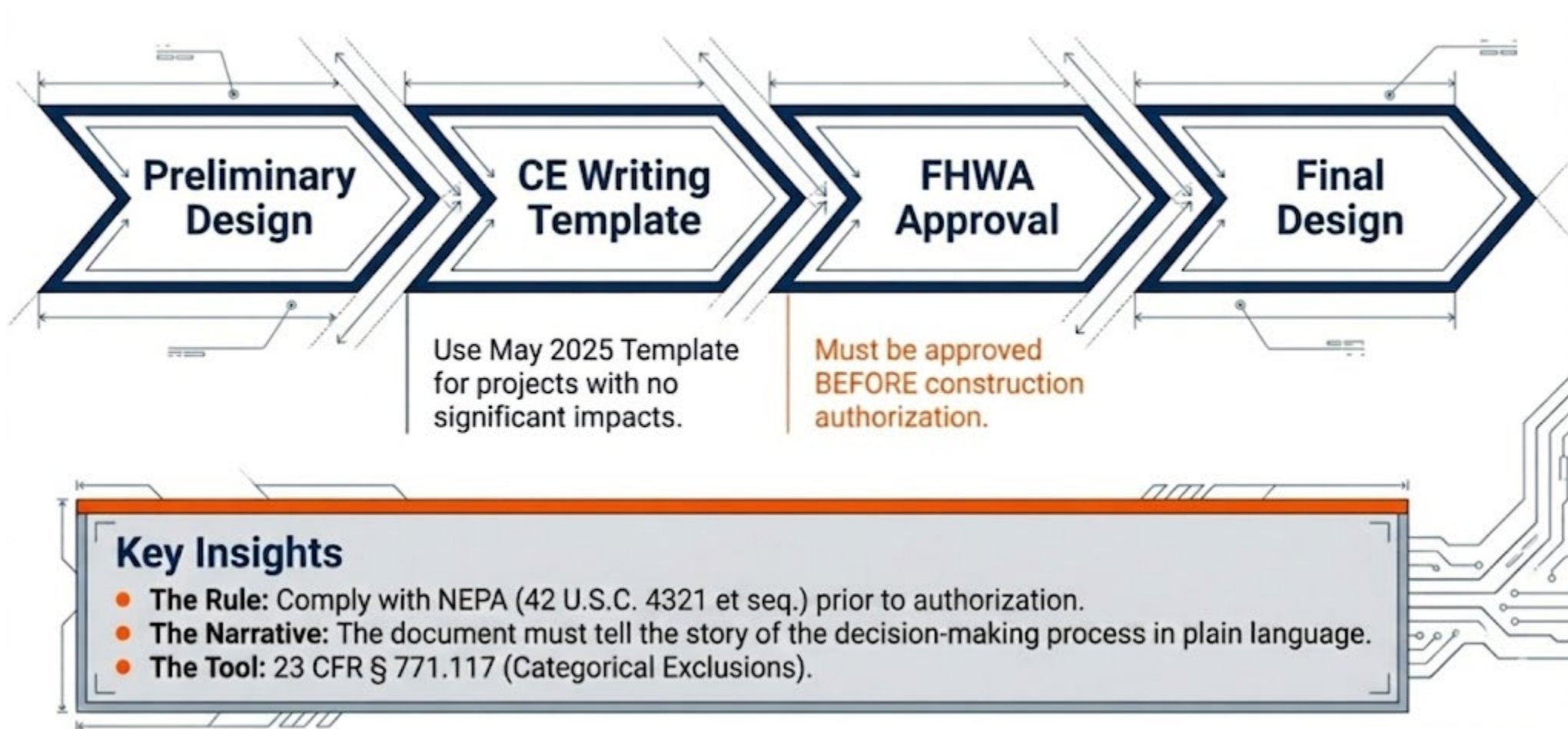


Image generated by Google Gemini

https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_topics/section_106_tutorial/chapter5_1.aspx

NEPA & The Categorical Exclusion (CE)



Critical Path: Right-of-Way (ROW), Railroad & Utilities

Right-of-Way Clearance

- Standard: “All necessary right-of-way has been acquired.” ([23 CFR 635.309\(c\)](#))
- Requirement: You cannot move to construction without legal land access. ([49 CFR 24.102\(j\)](#) & [23 CFR 635.309](#))
- Documentation: All proof of access must be in official project records. ([49 CFR 24.9](#) & [2 CFR 200.334](#))

Railroad & Utility Coordination.

- Action: Verify no conflicts exist or relocation plans and agreements are in place.
- Warning: Ignored railroad and utility conflicts are a primary cause of project delays.



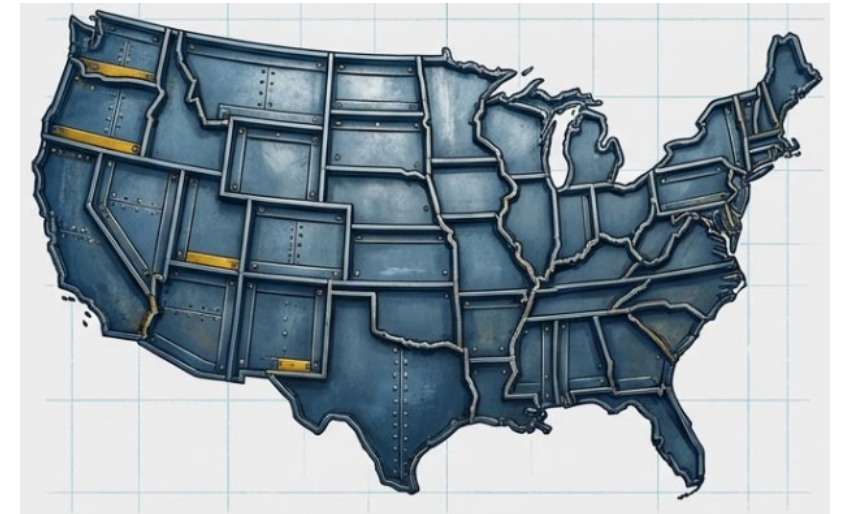
FHWA Buy America Requirements

23 U.S.C. 313; 23 CFR 635.410 (Iron & Steel; Manufactured Products)
Build America, Buy America Act (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs
Act, Pub. L. No. 117-58, §§ 70901-27; 2 CFR Part 184; OMB M-24-02)

Iron & Steel: Wholly or predominantly (>50%)

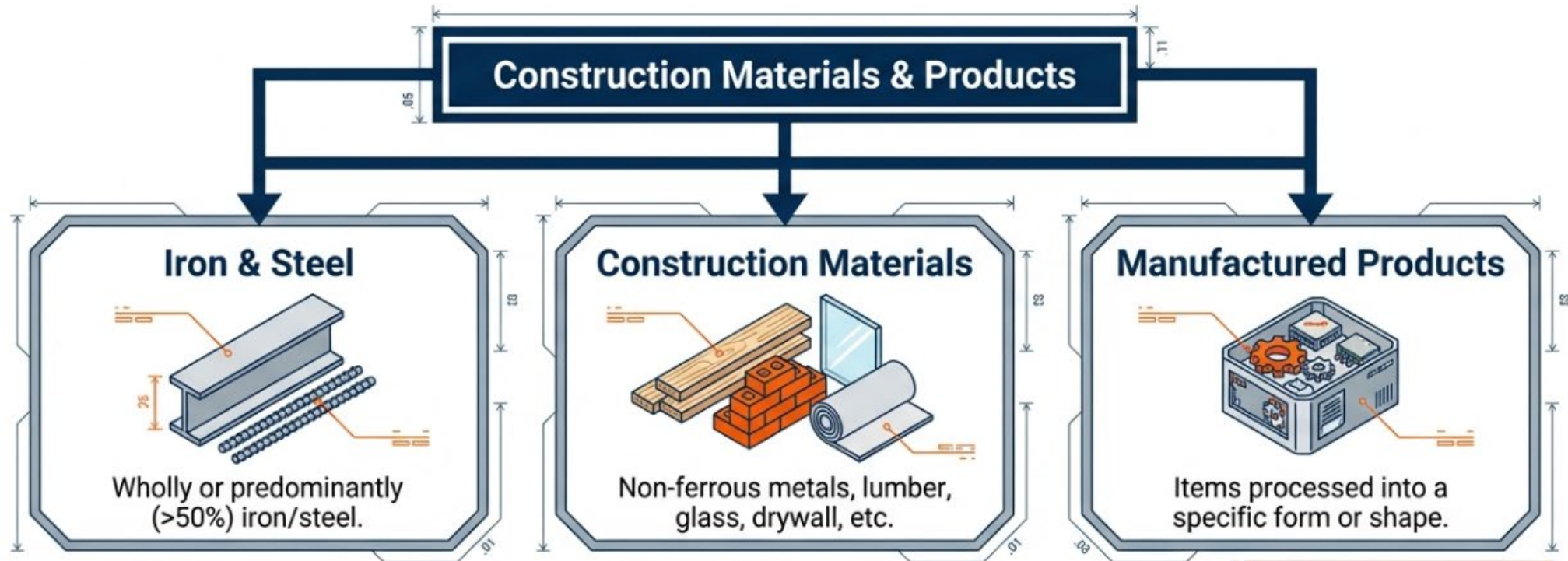
Construction Materials: Non-ferrous metals, plastic and
polymer-based products, glass, fiber optic cable, optical
fiber, lumber, glass, and drywall

Manufactured Products: Items processed into a specific
form or shape.



Post-Award

FHWA Buy America Requirements





U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

FHWA Manufactured Products Final Rule

- ✓ January 14, 2025: Final Rule published *terminating* FHWA's General Applicability Waiver for Manufactured Products ([90 FR 2932](#))
 - Effective date: March 20, 2025
 - Modifies 23 CFR 635.410
 - ❖ Amends definitions to align with those in BABA Act
 - ❖ Establishes requirements and transition dates (phases) for Manufactured Products
 - ❖ Establishes 2 exceptions to the “single bucket rule”





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U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

Manufactured Products Phases (90 FR 2932; 23 CFR 635.410)

For projects obligated:

<p>Before March 20, 2025</p>	<p>Between March 20, 2025 and September 30, 2025</p>	<p>Between October 1, 2025 and September 30, 2026</p>	<p>On or after October 1, 2026</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Waiver of Manufactured Products applies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General waiver of Manufactured Products continues to apply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Assembly Required in the US 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Assembly Required in the US • 55 percent standard*

**55 percent standard: the cost of components of the manufactured products that are mined, produced, or manufactured in the U.S. must be greater than 55 percent of the total cost of all components of the manufactured product*

Post-Award

CONSTRUCTION

- Title 23 CFR 630.205 requires various reviews/approvals during project development phases. One example is that Plans, Specifications and Estimate (PS&E) must be reviewed prior to authorizing a construction contract.
- Title 2 CFR 200.320(b)(1); 200.327; & Appendix II also includes construction contract requirements.
- It is highly recommended to get guidance from the FHWA Division Office prior to advertisement.
- NOFO may contain additional requirements.



Image generated by Google Gemini

Read the NOFO
Read the NOFO
Read the NOFO



Image generated by Google Gemini

SS4A PRE-AWARD VERIFICATION CHECKLIST

Pre-Award Verification Checklist

- Phase 1 Completion: Final Design is done.
- NEPA Clearance: Approval & Determination Type
- ROW Clearance: Documentation attached.
- BABA Compliance: Solicitation language page number
MUTCD Compliance: Statement of adherence
- Suspension/Debarment: Confirmed for all contractors.



Post-Award

Contract Award

- Must have and use recipient procurement procedures (2 CFR 200.318(a)).
- Federal regulations provide limited exceptions for non-competitive procurement in 2 CFR 200.320(c).
- Exceptions covered in the Simplified Acquisition Threshold (SAT).

Post-Award

Reporting

- All grants have reporting requirements (Scope, Schedule and Budget).
- Reporting intervals are program based (Monthly, Quarterly, Semi-Annually and/or Annually).
- Both the Grant Recipient and the Division Office must do reporting.

Post-Award

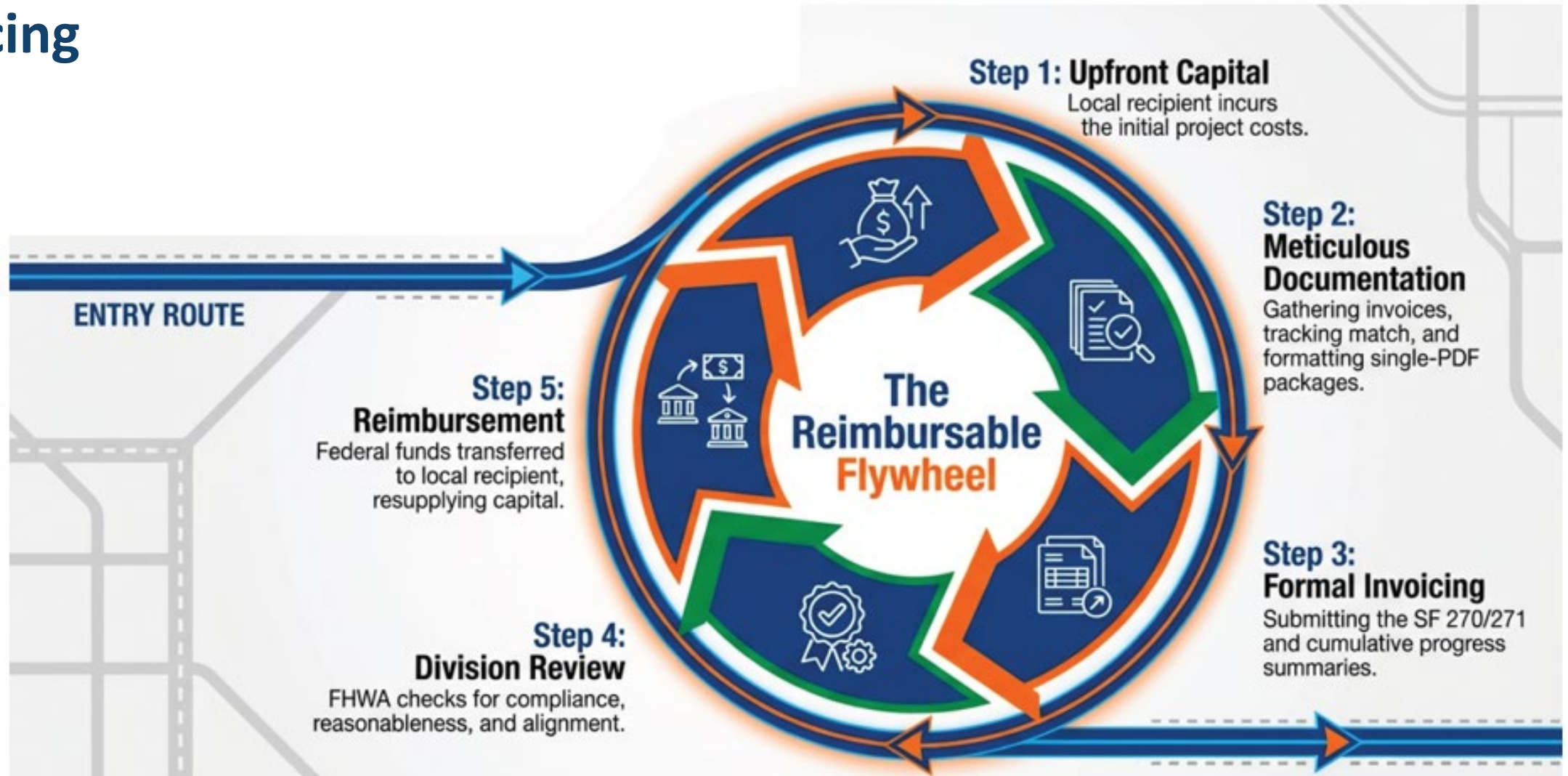
Reporting



Post-Award



Invoicing



Post-Award

Reimbursement Package Components

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1. The Cover Letter
Must include FAIN, Period of Performance, phase of expenditure, and the specific Federal/Non-Federal Match percentage split.

2. Certification of Costs
A signed affirmation that costs are reasonable, allocable, and allowable.

3. The Standard Forms
SF 270/271 in alignment with the agreement.

4. The Evidence
Bank statements or canceled checks proving the recipient actually paid the costs.

5. Progress Summary
Cumulative breakdown of multi-phase expenditures.



Pro Tip:
Recipient employees receiving payment for their work are considered actual costs, not "In-Kind" contributions.

Close-Out

You completed the work.

Am I done?

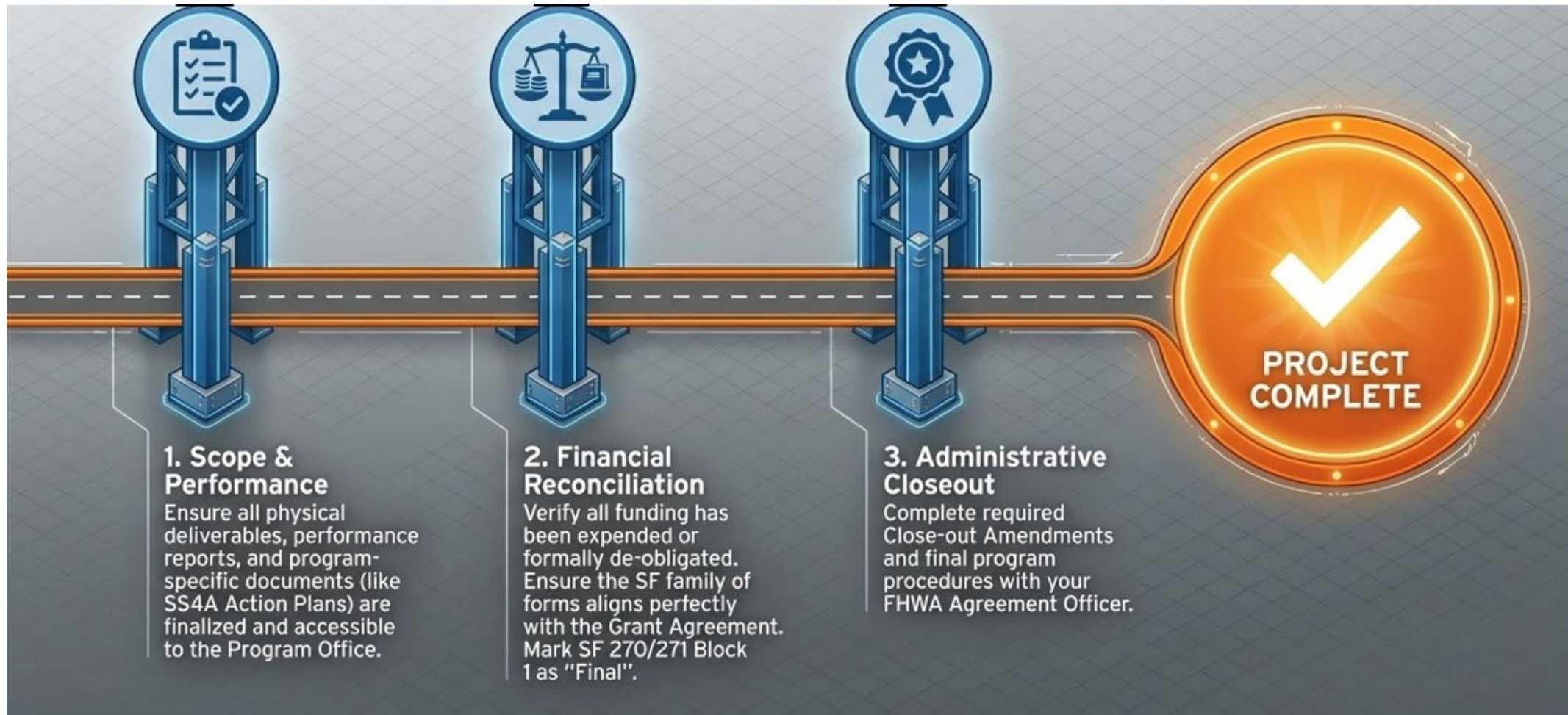
Is my Federal Commitment over?

Read the NOFO
Read the NOFO
Read the NOFO



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Closeout



[2 CFR 200.344](#)

Questions?

Maryland Grant Contacts



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