

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

Fiscal Year 2012

**Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks
(CVISN) Grant Program**
Opportunity Announcement and Application Instructions

Section I: Funding Opportunity Description

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks (CVISN) grant program provides financial assistance to eligible States to 1) improve the safety and productivity of commercial vehicles and drivers and 2) reduce costs associated with commercial vehicle operations and Federal and State commercial vehicle regulatory requirements. The purpose of this notice of funding availability is to solicit additional applications for CVISN funding. New applications *must* be submitted through Grants.gov by **11:59 P.M. Eastern Standard Time (EST), on Wednesday, May 2, 2012.**

The original application due date of April 30, 2012 has been extended until May 2, 2012. This extension is to accommodate the Grants.gov system maintenance schedule.

The FMCSA announces this grant opportunity based on authorities provided for in section 4126 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (Pub. L. 109-59). The Agency will inform applicants if new authorizing legislation changes its grant programs for fiscal year (FY) 2012.

The FMCSA announced the initial FY 2012 funding availability on October 13, 2011 with an application deadline of December 5, 2011. Based on that notice, FMCSA received applications totaling \$12.9M. These applications are currently under review, but there remains at least \$12.1M available for award in this fiscal year (subject to Agency authorization – FMCSA will notify applicants if there is a change to its authorization for FY 2012 grants). Therefore, FMCSA announces with this notice that it will consider additional applications submitted by **May 2, 2012**. Applications submitted in response to this announcement SHOULD NOT include ANY projects previously requested in the initial FY 2012 funding availability unless there has been a substantial modification to the application or project focus. If this occurs, the application should clearly note this.

Section II: Award Information

For FY 2012, FMCSA anticipates awarding \$25 million in CVISN funds to advance technological capability and promote the deployment of intelligent transportation systems applications for commercial vehicle operations, including commercial vehicle, commercial driver, and carrier-specific information systems and networks. As provided for in Section 4126(g)(1) of SAFETEA-LU, CVISN funds enable States to:

1. Improve the safety of commercial motor vehicle operations;
2. Increase the efficiency of regulatory inspection processes to reduce administrative burdens by advancing technology to facilitate inspections and increase the effectiveness of enforcement efforts;
3. Advance electronic processing of registration information, driver licensing information, fuel tax information, inspection and crash data, and other safety information;
4. Enhance the safe passage of commercial motor vehicles across the United States and across international borders; and
5. Promote the communication of information among the States and encourage multistate cooperation and corridor development.

CVISN is a reimbursable grant program. The Federal share of funds under the CVISN grant program is 50 percent. There is a 50 percent State matching or cost-sharing requirement.

Priority Funding Requests

Priority funding consideration will be given to applications that deploy or enhance the Commercial Vehicle Information Exchange Window (CVIEW). CVIEW is an integral part of the CVISN program and is a key mechanism through which agencies within a State can share commercial vehicle credential and safety information among themselves. CVIEW also is the means by which States can share commercial vehicle credential and safety information with other jurisdictions. This interstate data exchange enables numerous critical safety programs, including real-time electronic screening of interstate vehicles.

Section III: Eligibility Information

The FMCSA may award CVISN funds to State agencies, including the District of Columbia and U.S. territories that are designated as the lead agency in the State's CVISN Program Plan and Top-Level Design (PP/TLD). ***Individuals or businesses are not eligible to apply.***

There are five types of CVISN grants: 1) core or expanded PP/TLD grants; 2) core deployment grants; 3) expanded deployment grants; 4) core maintenance grants; and 5) expanded maintenance grants. The FMCSA will first fund projects that advance States toward meeting core deployment. Remaining funds will then be awarded for expanded CVISN deployment projects, and, finally, for core or expanded maintenance projects (e.g., memberships, fees, dues, and other related program maintenance costs). Additional information about the types of grants is included below:

1. **Core or Expanded PP/TLD Grants:** The purpose of a core or expanded PP/TLD grant is to provide a management framework and system architecture to guide future State

CVISN deployment. The PP/TLD is also used as a guide for States to advise policy and decision makers regarding the funding and technical resources required for successful CVISN implementation. A State may apply for a PP/TLD grant of up to \$100,000 to develop the PP/TLD.

A State **MUST** have a core PP/TLD approved by the Agency before they are eligible to receive future core deployment or core maintenance grant funding.

Additionally, a State **MUST** have an expanded PP/TLD approved by the Agency before they are eligible to receive future expanded deployment grant funding. A State **DOES NOT** need to have an expanded PP/TLD approved by the Agency before they are eligible to receive future expanded maintenance grant funding. See below for further information about the difference between deployment and maintenance grants.

2. **Core Deployment Grants:** The purpose of a core deployment grant is for States to carry out CVISN capabilities in the areas of safety information exchange (e.g., inspection reporting), credentials administration (e.g., electronic processing of fees), and electronic screening (e.g., screening transponder-equipped trucks automatically pass roadside inspection stations at highway speeds).

Under SAFETEA-LU and its predecessor authorizing statute, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), FMCSA may not award an aggregate total in excess of \$2.5 million in core deployment grants to a State. States are directed to contact their respective FMCSA State Division Administrator for information regarding the amount they are eligible to receive.

As noted above, a State **MUST** have a core PP/TLD approved by the Agency before they are eligible to receive future core deployment or core maintenance grants.

3. **Expanded Deployment Grants:** The purpose of an expanded deployment grant is for States to carry out capabilities that exceed the requirements of core deployment, improve safety and productivity of commercial motor vehicle operations, and enhance transportation security. To be eligible for a CVISN expanded deployment grant, States **MUST FIRST** become core-certified. To become core-certified, a State must:

- Have a core PPTLD approved by the FMCSA;
- Certify that State CVISN deployment activities (e.g., hardware procurement, software and system development, and infrastructure modifications) are consistent with the national intelligent transportation systems (ITS) and CVISN architectures/standards, as well as promote interoperability and efficiency; and
- Agree to execute FMCSA interoperability tests to verify that State systems conform with the national ITS architecture, applicable standards, and protocols.

Upon completion of core deployment and FMCSA verification, the maximum amount a State may receive for an expanded deployment grant in any fiscal year is \$1 million.

A State with a CVIEW system that is offline is no longer considered to have completed core deployment and therefore is not eligible to apply for a CVISN expanded deployment grant until the CVIEW is back online. FMCSA reserves the right to withhold reimbursement of existing funding of a CVISN expanded grant if the State can no longer demonstrate that it has completed core deployment or maintain core deployment status.

A State that has completed core deployment and certified by FMCSA may use unexpended core deployment funds for expanded deployment activities.

If a core certified State has not been awarded the full \$2.5 million in core deployment funds, the State may apply for the remaining balance and use it towards expanded deployment projects. Additionally, Section 4126(c)(3) of SAFETEA-LU allows for a core certified State to apply for up to \$1 million for expanded grant activities in addition to receiving a grant for its remaining core balance.

A State must complete two applications to apply for funds under Section 4126(c)(3): one application in the amount of the remaining core balance and another, separate application in the amount of the expanded grant. States are directed to contact their respective FMCSA State Division Administrator for information regarding the amount they are eligible to receive.

4. **Core Maintenance Grants:** The purpose of a core maintenance grant is to allow a State to fund memberships, fees, dues, and other related program maintenance costs. A typical expense in this category includes (but is not limited to) International Fuel Tax Association fees, PrePass memberships, or warranty maintenance. A core State must have a core PP/TLD approved by FMCSA to be eligible for core maintenance funds.
5. **Expanded Maintenance Grants:** The purpose of an expanded maintenance grant is to allow a State to fund memberships, fees, dues, and other related program maintenance costs. A typical expense in this category includes (but is not limited to) International Fuel Tax Association fees, PrePass memberships, or warranty maintenance. A core-certified State DOES NOT have to submit an expanded PP/TLD to be eligible for a maintenance grant.

CVISN Match Requirement and Eligible Expenses

The FMCSA will reimburse up to 50 percent of the State's total approved program costs that are consistent with the approved project plan. States must provide the remaining 50 percent of the program costs. These matching funds can be in-kind or cash. As examples, eligible sources of matching funds include:

- State or private sector funds dedicated or used for CVISN activities
- State-paid staff salaries

- Equipment or facilities (PrePass, NORPASS equipment, computers)
- Operations and maintenance expenses on CVISN-related systems
- State/private sector funded development of CVISN-related systems
- International Registration Plan / International Fuel Tax Association fees
- Uniform Carrier Registration (UCR) fees*

*UCR fees may be used as a CVISN match for only safety-related projects (e.g., safety information exchange and electronic screening).

Also, State match from de-obligated CVISN funds cannot be re-used as match for new CVISN grant funds.

Under 4126(f), the total Federal share of the cost of a project payable from all eligible Federal sources shall not exceed 80 percent.

All reimbursable items *must* be necessary, reasonable, allocable, and allowable under [49 CFR Part 18](#) and in [2 CFR Part 225](#) (supersedes OMB Circular A-87). Acquisitions of real property, land, or buildings are NOT eligible expenses under the CVISN grant program. The eligibility of specific items is subject to review by FMCSA. The below list summarizes the *most common* expenses that are eligible for reimbursement:

- Support CVISN Program Management;
 - Staff Salaries
 - Support Services
- Ongoing CVISN-related Operations and Maintenance (O&M) expenses;
 - System Maintenance costs
 - System License fees
- CVISN-related memberships and fees;
 - Electronic screening program fees
 - Clearinghouse fees
- Clerical and administrative expenses, to the extent necessary and directly attributable to CVISN.

Section IV: Application and Submission Information

To apply, the applicant *must* complete the Grants.gov registration process. To start registering, click [here](#) and follow the instructions found on the Grants.gov “[Get Registered](#)” website. The registration process can take as long as four weeks. Applicants are encouraged to register as soon as possible.

The Grants.gov website provides customer support via (800) 518-GRANTS or through e-mail at support@grants.gov. The customer support center is open from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Eastern time, Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays, to address Grants.gov technology issues.

The applicant must **download** (http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp) the grant application package from Grants.gov, complete it, and submit the completed application package with required attachments, through Grants.gov on or before the deadline of 11:59 P.M. (EST) on **Wednesday, May 2, 2012.**

Successful application processing depends upon the completeness and accuracy of the information provided.

Application Package – Standard Forms

The following standard forms must be completed on line for inclusion in the CVISN application package:

1. SF-424, Standard Application for Federal Assistance
2. SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs
3. SF-424B, Assurances for Non-Construction Programs
4. Key Contacts Form
5. SF-GG, Grants.gov Lobbying form
6. *If applicable*, SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
7. Attachment form (used to submit required additional or supplemental information)

Please note applications received without the complete set of required forms will not be evaluated until all forms are received. All standard forms are part of the application package available for download and completion in Grants.gov.

Key Contacts Form Instructions

Each applicant must submit a Key Contacts Form as part of their application for FMCSA grants. The form should be filled in completely. All fields marked with and with asterisk (*) symbol are mandatory. Please use the following instructions when completing the Key Contacts Form:

Applicant Organization Name: In the “Applicant Organization Name” field at the top of the Key Contacts Form please use the same organization name used in the SF-424.

Contact 1 Project Role: For Contact 1 Project Role, please include the contact information for the person in the organization who is authorized to sign the grant agreement on behalf of the organization. This individual is typically the head of the organization or a designee (ex: Colonel, Director, Commissioner, etc).

Contact 2 Project Role: In Contact 2 Project Role please provide the contact information for the person in your organization who will have daily oversight over implementing the program. This role is typically performed by the project/program manager (ex: Unit Commander, Project Coordinator, etc.).

Contact 3 Project Role: For Contact 3 Project Role please provide the contact information for the person responsible for monitoring grant program finances. This individual should be able to provide clarification on financial information such as budget details, Single Audits, invoice support documentation, and so forth. This role is typically performed by a grant, finance, or administrative/program specialist.

Additional contact information may be provided at the discretion of the applicant.

In addition to the above list of standard forms, the applicant must also submit the following required supplemental information:

Mandatory Attachment #1: Program Narrative

The *CVISN Project Plan Templates* have been created as a guide for FY 2012 CVISN applicants and are available for download in the “FULL ANNOUNCEMENT” link at the top of the FY 2012 CVISN Grants.gov opportunity. These templates are offered for the preparation of a performance-based narrative. The templates are available for States in either the Core or Expanded Deployment stage.

The elements of a well-constructed narrative and their respective purposes are listed below:

1. The **needs assessment** discusses the existing situation and identifies the problems that the project will address.
2. The **performance-based objectives** describe priority activities and resulting outcomes that the applicant intends to accomplish during the funding period, as well as identifying the beneficiaries of the proposed program. These targets should support FMCSA’s mission.
3. The **activities description** explains how the applicant intends to reach the stated objectives and thereby resolve or prevent the problems identified in the needs statement. All proposed tasks should be presented in a logical order and describe how they directly relate to accomplishing the project’s objectives.

4. The narrative *must* identify **resources and needs** required for the proposed project, including equipment, facilities, and training, among others.
5. The program narrative *must* also describe the methods the applicant will use to **monitor** project progress and what accountability measures will be used to **evaluate** the project results, i.e., how the applicant will determine whether or not the project has achieved its stated performance targets and the extent to which achieving those targets can be attributed to the project.
6. FMCSA anticipates that the States will be required to provide the following information on a quarterly basis to support the CVISN Program Performance Monitoring Requirements:
 - Number of sites equipped with e-screening functionality,
 - Number of inspections resulting from e-screening decisions,
 - Number of bypasses,
 - Number of new IRP transactions conducted electronically,
 - Number of renewal IRP transactions conducted electronically,
 - Number of new IFTA license transactions conducted electronically,
 - Number of quarterly IFTA tax payments processed electronically,
 - Number of state FTE personnel supporting IRP transactions; and
 - Number of state FTE personnel supporting IFTA transactions.
7. The **narrative and line item budget** must explain/justify the direct costs included in the applicant's line-item budget (which identifies the proposed project costs). The budget narrative should discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocability of all proposed costs.
8. The **geographic location** of the project should be noted in the program narrative, and maps or graphic aids may be included with the narrative description.
9. The **schedule** *must* identify the major milestones for the project, with target dates for meeting each milestone.
10. The narrative *should* **introduce the proposed project staff**. The introduction of the proposed project staff should consist of a biographical sketch of each key person who will be working on the project, including their relevant experience and particular qualifications for the proposed project.
11. The program narrative *should* provide an **overview of the organization**. The organizational overview should *establish* the qualifications of the organization seeking the funds and may include such information as a statement of legal basis, prior record of achievement, and indication of cooperative relationships with other organizations, and other resources available to the organization.

12. The narrative *may* also provide a **dissemination plan**, which describes the means by which the applicant intends to disseminate the project results to other interested parties.
13. Applications for continuation of a previously-funded program *should* also include a **prior year budget by line item, showing expenditures to date**.

Mandatory Attachment #2: Line-item Budget

In addition to the program narrative, the other substantive portion of the application is the budget. The budget identifies all proposed project costs (direct and indirect costs), including matching funds required, if applicable. Both cash and in-kind contributions are eligible as matching funds. Refer to [49 CFR Part 18.24](#) for more information related to acceptable matching and cost sharing. Items that may be included in the budget as **direct costs** are:

- Salaries and wages of the personnel associated with the project, including those of research assistants (graduate students, usually), fringe benefits such as contributions to employee benefits (e.g. social security, pension funds), and the amount of time their personnel will spend on the project;
- Equipment, indicating whether it will be purchased or leased;
- Materials and supplies;
- Publication costs and document dissemination;
- Travel, if it is related directly to project objectives (applicants should include information such as places to be visited, the purpose, and anticipated dates of travel);
- Consultant services;
- Items such as computer services, if not included as part of the indirect costs; and
- Contract and/or subawards.

Mandatory Attachment #3: FMCSA Administrative Capability Questionnaire

Every applicant must submit a completed and signed *FMCSA Administrative Capability Questionnaire*. The questionnaire is available for download in the “FULL ANNOUNCEMENT” link at the top of the FY2012 CVISN Grants.gov opportunity.

Mandatory Attachment #4: For Continuation of a Previously-Funded Program Only

Any application for funding that essentially continues a previously-approved CVISN grant must submit copies of the most recently filed SF-PPR (Performance Progress report) and SF-425 (Federal Financial Report) forms for that grant.

Section V: Application Review

Initially, all application packages will be reviewed for eligibility and completeness. Each complete application from an eligible recipient will then be evaluated by a technical review panel. Applicants are strongly encouraged to follow the performance-based application guidance in Mandatory Attachment #1: Program Narrative and Mandatory Attachment #2: Line Item Budget.

The panel will evaluate each proposal, based on the following factors:

- **Prior Performance** – Completion of identified programs and goals per the project plan submitted under previous grants awarded to the applicant.
- **Effective Use of Prior Grants** – The applicant has demonstrated timely use of available funds in previous awards.
- **Safety and Cost Effectiveness** – Applications will be evaluated and prioritized based on the expected impact on safety relative to the investment of grant funds. Where appropriate, costs per unit will be calculated and compared with national averages to determine effectiveness. In other areas, proposed costs will be compared with historical information to confirm reasonableness.
- **Applicability to Announced Priorities** – grant applications that specifically address these issues will be given priority consideration.
- **Ability of the applicant to support the strategies and activities** in the proposal for the entire project period of performance.
- **Feasibility of overall program coordination and implementation** based upon the project plan.
- Additionally, the technical review panel will consider other objective and performance-based criteria that FMCSA deems appropriate, such as consistency with national priorities and overall program balance. Preference will be given to performance-based proposals that incorporate:
 - A description of how the proposal contributes to achieving FMCSA’s goal of reducing the rate of large truck-and bus-related fatalities;
 - Specific objectives and goals that are supported by data analysis;
 - Clearly-defined strategies, activities, timelines, and performance measures; and
 - A commitment to monitoring and evaluating results to facilitate improved performance.

FMCSA will first fund projects that advance States toward meeting core deployment. Remaining funds will then be awarded for expanded CVISN projects, and, finally, for

maintenance projects (e.g., memberships, fees, dues, and other related program maintenance costs).

Section VI: Award Administration Information

Following final selection, all applicants will be notified of the panel’s decision by their respective State’s FMCSA Division Administrator. FMCSA expects to notify applicants within ninety (90) days of the submission deadline, and to release awards soon thereafter as is administratively practicable, subject to availability of funds.

Notifying Award Recipients

Following the approval of the award recommendations, the Awardee will receive a Notice of Grant Agreement (NGA) directly from the FMCSA grants management platform, Grant Solutions. (Grantees will automatically be assigned a user account in GrantSolutions by the system.) Once established as a user in Grant Solutions, the Awardee will be notified by the system when the Grant Agreement is awaiting acceptance and ready for signature.

Notifying Unsuccessful Applicants

Applicants not selected for funding will receive written notification, and may request the return of their proposal by contacting their State’s FMCSA Division Administrator.

Section VII: Agency Contact

The CVISN grant program is managed by:

United States Department of Transportation,
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration,
Associate Administrator for Enforcement and Program Delivery, and
Associate Administrator for Research and Information Technology

For more information related to this announcement or application submission, contact your respective [FMCSA Field Office](#), or one of the points of contact below:

Mr. Jose M. Rodriguez <i>CVISN Technical Program Manager</i> Email (preferred): Jose.Rodriguez@dot.gov Office: 202-366-3517	Ms. Julie Otto <i>CVISN Grant Program Manager</i> Email (preferred): Julie.Otto@dot.gov Office: 202-366-0710
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Section VIII: Other Information

FMCSA Financial Assistance Website:

<http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safety-security/GRANTS/financial-assistance.aspx>