

SS4A Frequently Asked Question

SS4A Grant Priorities

What is the SS4A grant program?

The purpose of SS4A grant program is to improve roadway safety by significantly reducing or eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries through safety action plan development and implementation focused on all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, motorists, personal conveyance and micromobility users, and commercial vehicle operators. The program provides funding to develop the tools to strengthen a community's approach to safety and save lives.

SS4A Grant Types

What types of grants are available under the SS4A program?

The SS4A program provides funding for two types of grants:

- **Action Plan Grants** provide Federal funds to develop, complete, or supplement a comprehensive safety action plan. Having an Action Plan in place is the foundation of the SS4A grant program. Action Plan Grants may also fund supplemental Action Plan activities. The goal of an Action Plan is to develop a holistic, well-defined strategy to prevent roadway fatalities and serious injuries in a locality, Tribe, or region.
- **Implementation Grants** provide Federal funds to implement projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan to address a roadway safety problem. Projects and strategies may be infrastructure, behavioral, and/or operational activities. Implementation Grants may also fund associated planning and design and supplemental Action Plan activities in support of an existing Action Plan. Applicants must have an existing Action Plan to apply for Implementation Grants or have an existing plan that is substantially similar and meets the eligibility requirements.

Eligibility to Apply

Who is eligible to apply for Safe Streets and Roads for All grants?

For an Action Plan Grant, eligible applicants are:

1. A metropolitan planning organization (MPO);
2. A political subdivision of a State (e.g., cities, towns, counties, special districts, and similar units of local government);
3. A federally recognized Tribal government; or
4. A multijurisdictional group of entities described in (1) through (3).

For an Implementation Grant, eligible applicants listed above must also meet at least one of the following conditions:

1. Have ownership and/or maintenance responsibilities over a roadway network;
2. Be an eligible applicant with safety responsibilities that affect roadways; or

3. Have agreement from the agency that has ownership and/or maintenance responsibilities for the roadway within the applicant's jurisdiction.

What defines an applicant's jurisdiction?

For the purposes of the SS4A Notice of Funding Opportunity, an applicant's jurisdiction is defined as the U.S. Census tracts where the applicant operates or performs their safety responsibilities.

Are rural communities eligible for Safe Streets and Roads for All grants?

Yes. Roadway safety in rural areas is a major concern, and this grant program is designed to support all kinds of communities. USDOT's [Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success](#) (ROUTES) program offers guidance to assist rural areas with the grant application process.

For the purposes of the SS4A Notice of Funding Opportunity, applicants with jurisdictions outside an Urbanized Area (UA) or located within Urbanized Areas with populations fewer than 200,000 will be considered rural. You can [find updated lists of Urbanized Areas on the U.S. Census Bureau website](#).

Are transit agencies eligible for this funding?

A transit district, authority, or public benefit corporation may be eligible as a political subdivision of a State if it was created under State law, including transit authorities operated by political subdivisions of a State. States are not eligible applicants, but USDOT encourages applicants to coordinate with State entities, as appropriate.

Grant Awards, Funding, and Match

What are the DOT priorities when reviewing grants for award?

For Action Plan Grants, DOT seeks to make awards based on safety impact, equity, and additional safety considerations.

For Implementation Grants, DOT seeks to make awards to projects and strategies that:

- Save lives and reduce roadway fatalities and serious injuries;
- Incorporate equity, engagement, and collaboration into how projects and strategies are executed;
- Use effective practices and strategies; and
- Consider climate change, sustainability, and economic competitiveness in project and strategy implementation.

Project readiness and funding to provide safety benefits for underserved communities are considerations for Implementation Grants, and budget costs are a consideration for both Action Plan and Implementation Grants.

How much funding is available?

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law established the SS4A program and approved \$6 billion in funding, with \$5 billion in advanced appropriations. For fiscal year 2022, \$1 billion has been made available for grants under the SS4A program.

Is there a minimum or maximum award size?

There is no funding minimum or maximum. However, the [NOFO](#) provides expected minimum and maximum ranges for applicant consideration.

For Action Plan Grants, award amounts will be based on estimated costs, with an expected minimum of \$200,000 for all applicants, an expected maximum of \$1,000,000 for a political subdivision of a State or a federally recognized Tribal government, and an expected maximum of \$5,000,000 for an MPO or a joint application comprised of a multijurisdictional group of entities that is regional in scope (e.g., a multijurisdictional group of counties, a council of governments and cities within the same region, etc.).

For Implementation Grants, DOT expects the minimum award will be \$5,000,000 and the maximum award will be \$30,000,000 for political subdivisions of a State. For applicants who are federally recognized Tribal governments or applicants in rural areas, DOT expects the minimum award will be \$3,000,000 and the maximum award will be \$30,000,000. For an MPO or a joint application comprised of a multijurisdictional group of entities that is regional in scope, the expected maximum award will be \$50,000,000.

Is there an anticipated number of awards to be made?

In FY22, DOT expects to award hundreds of Action Plan Grants, and up to one hundred Implementation Grants. DOT reserves the right in the SS4A NOFO to make more, or fewer, awards, as well as the discretion to alter minimum and maximum award sizes upon receiving the full pool of applications and assessing the needs of the program.

Is there a matching funds requirement for these grants?

Yes. Recipients are required to contribute a local matching share of no less than 20 percent of eligible activity costs. All matching funds must be from non-Federal sources, which could include in-kind contributions, funding from the applicant, or other SS4A-eligible non-Federal sources partnering with the applicant.

Unless otherwise authorized by statute, non-Federal cost-share may not be counted as the non-Federal share for both the SS4A grant and another Federal grant program.

[Learn more about cost sharing or matching](#) in the Code of Federal Regulations' uniform guidance on match requirements (2 CFR § 200.306).

Are there any restrictions on funding?

- The SS4A statute requires not more than 15 percent of the funds be awarded to eligible applicants in a single State. For example, if \$1 billion is awarded in FY22, the maximum amount of funding to all recipients in a given State would be \$150 million.
- Funding for Tribal lands will be treated as their own State and will not count toward a State's 15 percent limit.
- The SS4A statute also requires 40 percent of the total FY22 funds be made available for comprehensive safety action plans, which includes developing and updating a comprehensive safety action plan, and supplemental action plan activities. For example, if \$1 billion is awarded in FY22, the minimum amount of funding to be made available to comprehensive safety action plans is \$400 million.

Can an eligible applicant get both an Action Plan grant award and an Implementation grant award to implement the Action Plan recommendations?

No. For FY22 funding, an eligible applicant will only be able to apply for an Action Plan **OR** an Implementation Grant, but not both. The program design encourages Action Plan grantees who have completed and published their plans to move forward with implementation.

Can an eligible applicant apply for and receive multiple SS4A awards in the same year?

No. An eligible applicant may only submit one application to the funding opportunity.

Would an entity be eligible for an Implementation Grant in later years of SS4A after receiving an Action Plan Grant in this year?

Yes, this is an encouraged and desired goal of the program. An Action Plan Grant award recipient can apply for Implementation Grants to execute the Action Plan in future funding rounds.

What kind of funds can make up the local match?

A local match of no less than 20 percent is required for all SS4A grant funds. Local match may include both cash as well as in-kind contributions. Details on cost-sharing and match can be found in [2 CFR § 200.306](#).

In-kind contributions are typically in the form of the value of personnel, goods, services, space, and utilities contributed by a non-federal third party, such as a private business or nonprofit, specifically for the project. Routine operations and passive attendance at events do not count as in-kind match. Additionally, the value of personnel, goods, services, space, and utilities provided by the recipient toward work on the grant may count toward local match, and may be billed as direct or indirect costs, as appropriate, toward the grant and reimbursed with SS4A funding.

Local match may be used only once and may not be used as match for multiple Federal awards. Other Federal funds cannot be used toward a recipient's local match requirement including, but not limited to, the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program and Transportation Alternatives set aside funding, Federal funds from other DOT discretionary grant awards, and funds from the American Rescue Plan.

Are overmatches encouraged or scored higher, similar to RAISE or INFRA grants?

While the Department encourages maximum local contribution, it will not give preference toward projects that provide a local match above 20 percent.

Are rural communities, underserved communities, or MPOs eligible for a waiver of the 20 percent match?

No, there are no exemptions for the non-Federal match requirement. A match of no less than 20 percent will be required by applicants for all Federal funds, which could include matching funds as well as in-kind contributions.

Can an entity apply for a Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant at the same that they're applying for other grant funding opportunities?

Generally, yes. We encourage applicants to leverage all available USDOT grant programs. However, if you receive multiple sources of funding for the same project, you will need to clearly delineate which sources fund which components or phases.

What is the difference between supplemental planning activities and the planning, design, and development activities in support of an Action Plan?

What is the difference between supplemental planning activities—funded through an Action Plan Grant under eligible activity (A)—and the planning, design, and development activities in support of an Action Plan—funded through an Implementation Grant under eligible activity (B)?

Action Plan Grants that fund supplemental action plan activities are to support or enhance an existing Action Plan and are considered to be under the eligible activity (A) developing a comprehensive safety action plan or Action Plan (i.e., the activities outlined in Section A.2.i in [Table 1](#) of the NOFO and the list of supplemental Action Plan activities). Implementation Grants may fund supplemental action plan activities under eligible activity (B) conducting planning, design, and development activities for projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan, as well as supplemental action plan activities under eligible activity (A).

Generally speaking, supplemental action plan activities (A) encompass a broader geography or set of projects in support of an Action Plan Grant and associated planning efforts, and eligible activity (B) would fund project- and strategy-specific planning, design, and development activities directly connected to implementing a project or strategy through an Implementation Grant.

Eligible Plans and Projects

What activities are eligible for funding under an Action Plan Grant?

For an Action Plan Grant, eligible activities and costs include only those that directly assist in the development of the Action Plan or supplemental action plan activities in support of an existing Action Plan.

What activities are eligible for funding under an Implementation Grant?

Activities *must* include carrying out projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan. Projects and strategies must be infrastructure, behavioral, or operational activities identified in the Action Plan and must be directly related to addressing the safety problem(s) identified in the application and Action Plan. Implementation Grants *may also* include supplemental action plan activities in support of an existing Action Plan, as well as fund associated planning and design.

Applications must identify the problems to be addressed, the relevant geographic locations, and the projects and strategies they plan to implement, based on their Action Plan or established plan. This should include specific intervention types to the extent practical.

If a recipient enters into an arrangement with a State DOT or another State or local governmental entity to administer an SS4A grant, are the costs incurred managing the award eligible for reimbursement with SS4A funds?

Yes. Under 2 CFR § 200, Subpart E, these costs may be reimbursed either as indirect costs if such costs are included in the recipient's approved indirect cost rate, or as a direct cost if the cost is incurred specifically for the award and not otherwise accounted for the approved indirect cost rate. If a recipient intends to enter into such an arrangement and seek reimbursement of direct costs through the grant, those estimated costs should be included in the grant application. During administration, the recipient is

responsible for ensuring direct costs incurred are eligible and allocable to the grant administration. States will not have direct funding relationships with USDOT.

Can an existing safety plan qualify as a comprehensive safety action plan (e.g., a Tribal Transportation Safety Plan, Local Roadway Safety Plan, or Statewide Strategic Highway Safety Plan)?

It depends on the scope and focus of the plan. Regional, Tribal, and local level plans could be a qualifying action plan if they contain the necessary components and requirements. Whether a plan qualifies as a comprehensive safety action plan is based on the [Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet](#) or [Table 2](#) in the NOFO. State-level action plans, including but not limited to a Strategic Highway Safety Plan, cannot be used as a qualifying plan.

Will safety Action Plans that have already been created be eligible for implementation funding (e.g., a Vision Zero plan already adopted by a city)? Is having a “Vision Zero” plan a requirement to be eligible for this funding?

An existing plan will be eligible for Implementation Grant funding if it meets the requirements outlined in the NOFO. The [Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet](#) or [Table 2](#) in the NOFO assists a potential applicant to determine whether a plan, or set of plans, meet the eligibility requirements.

Will USDOT review my action plan to see if I can apply for an Implementation Grant before I apply?

USDOT will not review any Action Plans prior to submission of applications to determine whether a potential applicant meets the eligibility requirement for an Implementation Grant or an Action Plan Grant to fund supplemental Action Plan activities. USDOT encourages the use of the [Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet](#) to determine whether your action plan qualifies as a comprehensive safety action plan for the purposes of the NOFO.

Applicants are expected to provide accurate information and must meet the standards and submit the supporting documentation outlined in the [Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet](#) as part of both an Implementation Grant application and an Action Plan Grant application funding supplemental Action Plan activities. USDOT reserves the right to review plans and request additional information to affirm that a plan meets the eligibility criteria.

Does a segment/intersection of the transportation system have to have a history of crashes involving cyclists/pedestrians in order to receive funding? Or are there alternative ways to identify safety issues?

Areas prioritized for projects must focus on addressing fatalities or serious injuries, but there is no requirement that projects focus on the exact locations of where fatality or serious injury occurs. Applicants are encouraged to address safety systematically instead of individual site treatments. Safety risk characterization could be done through risk models, hazard analysis, the identification of high-risk roadway features, road safety audits/assessments, and/or other proactive safety analyses.

Though State governments are not eligible for Safe Streets and Roads for All grants, can local governments apply for a project or strategy along a State-maintained facility if the State agreed and signed support for the project?

Yes. An eligible applicant must have an agreement with the agency that has ownership and/or maintenance responsibilities for the roadway within the applicant’s jurisdiction to implement the project or strategy as part of an Implementation Grant.

Would our project to widen our main street to increase the number of lanes be eligible under this grant?

Infrastructure projects primarily intended to expand capacity to improve Levels of Service for motorists on an existing roadway, such as the creation of additional lanes, are not eligible for funding (see Section C.4 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity). Projects and strategies should be identified in the Action Plan, and the activity must be directly related to addressing the associated safety problem(s).

We are developing a comprehensive safety action plan now that is nearly complete but will not be adopted until later this year. Can we apply for an Implementation Grant in this cycle?

To be eligible for Implementation Grants, Action Plans must be completed and adopted prior to submission of your application (on or before September 15, 2022) to qualify as an existing plan. If your plan is not complete before the September 15 deadline, we encourage you to complete your plan and apply for an Implementation Grant in a subsequent SS4A funding cycle.

My community has a bicycle and/or pedestrian safety action plan, but not one that focuses on all roadway users. Can we use that to apply for an Implementation Grant?

For this round of funding, a bicycle and/or pedestrian safety action plan is eligible if it meets the eligibility requirements for an existing Action Plan outlined in the [NOFO](#), even if it does not focus on all roadway users. It is possible that this could change for future years. We recommend documenting in your application the conditions that led the community to decide to develop the mode-specific safety action plan.

Is equity a consideration for eligible activities under an SS4A grant?

Yes, all projects and strategies as part of an Implementation Grant should consider equity in an application, as defined in the [NOFO](#). Equity is a required component of developing or completing an Action Plan.

For the purposes of the NOFO and in alignment with Federal Government Executive Orders, the definition of equity is the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons; Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

Joint Applications and Partnering Across Agencies

Can joint applications be submitted for Action Plan Grants?

Joint applications that engage multiple jurisdictions in the same region are encouraged to promote collaboration across multiple jurisdictions, leverage the expertise of multiple agencies, and facilitate partnerships with entities that have established financial relationships with DOT and knowledge of Federal grant administration requirements. Applicants may propose the development of a single Action Plan covering all jurisdictions, or several plans for individual jurisdictions, administered by the leading applicant. Each jurisdiction in a joint application must be an eligible applicant.

Since States are not eligible to apply for the SS4A grants, may a recipient establish an arrangement with a State department of transportation (DOT) or some other State or local governmental entity to administer an SS4A grant?

Yes. A recipient may establish an arrangement with a State DOT or another State or local governmental entity to administer an SS4A grant so long as that arrangement complies with State and local law. Under 2 CFR § 200.331, the recipient must determine whether such arrangement is contractual, such as an interagency agreement, or a subgrant. As provided at 2 CFR § 200.300(b), the recipient is responsible for compliance with all Federal requirements applicable to the award. States will not have direct funding relationships with USDOT.

Can I apply for multiple awards if I apply individually and as part of a joint application?

No. An eligible applicant may submit only one application to the funding opportunity. A joint application, which is comprised of a multijurisdictional group of entities that is regional in scope, and an individual application, would count as two separate applications.

If an applicant submits more than one application, USDOT will contact the applicant to confirm which application should proceed; the applicant will be expected to respond within two business days.

Do joint applications count toward the State cap?

Yes. Based on information provided in applications, the Department will allocate funding amounts to each State to calculate the contribution to the 15 percent maximum by State. In general, Tribal awards, including a consortium of Tribal governments, will not count against the 15 percent maximum by State.

Can an MPO or council of governments (COG) apply for a series of implementation projects and strategies across multiple jurisdictions under a single application?

Yes, a series of implementation projects across multiple jurisdictions can be grouped together under a single application. The projects and strategies must be in existing Action Plans and must address identified safety problems.

If my MPO is applying for an Action Plan grant, can my municipality also apply, or do we need to participate in a joint application?

Separate Action Plan Grant applications for similar jurisdiction areas are permitted. However, duplicative Action Plan Grant requests will be flagged during the application review process, and DOT may decline to fund duplicative applications irrespective of their individual merits. Joint applications are encouraged but are not required.

What is the difference between submitting a joint application and partnering with another entity?

A joint application is comprised of a multijurisdictional group of entities that is regional in scope (e.g., a multijurisdictional group of counties, a council of governments and cities within the same region, etc.). Joint applicants will all be signing a grant agreement, with one as the lead applicant and the rest as supporting signatories. All entities participating in a joint application must be eligible applicants.

Partners collaborate and work with an applicant on the execution of the project but are not applicants. Partners are not a party to the grant agreement and have no affiliation with USDOT. If an eligible applicant is a partner on an application (and not a joint applicant), being a partner on that application does not preclude the partner from submitting its own application.

What are the different scenarios for a local government to apply for its own grant vs. submitting a joint application with other local and/or regional entities?

See the [SS4A Joint Applicant Scenarios](#) for applicable scenarios and applicant options.

Program Requirements

Where can we find guidelines for development and content of a comprehensive safety action plan?

The [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) (NOFO) contains guidance about the development and content of a comprehensive safety action plan. See [Table 1](#) of the NOFO for more information.

Timelines

What is the application deadline?

Applications must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. EDT on Thursday, September 15, 2022. Late applications will not be accepted. Applications must be submitted through Grants.gov.

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