



**U.S. Department
of Transportation**

Pipeline and Hazardous
Materials Safety
Administration
(PHMSA)

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Pipeline Safety Information Grants to Communities: Technical Assistance Grants (TAG)

Fiscal Year 2022

NOFO Posted Date:	Thursday March 17, 2022
Application Due Date:	Wednesday April 27, 2022
Questions Due Date:	Wednesday April 20, 2022

Applicant must register at www.Grants.gov to apply online. It is highly recommended that applicants begin the registration process as soon as possible to avoid delays in submission. Additionally, applicants must maintain a valid Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and an active registration in the System for Award Management (SAM) at www.SAM.gov.

Furthermore, applicants must register with FedConnect at <https://www.fedconnect.net> for an account before submitting an application. Your organization's Marketing Partner ID number (MPIN), which can be retrieved from SAM, is required to create an account. For instructions on how to register in FedConnect and how it works, view the Tutorial on the FedConnect home page.

Assistance Listing Program Number (formerly CFDA)
20.710 "Technical Assistance Grants"

PHMSA NOFO Number 693JK322NF0004

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Program Summary

Federal Agency Name: U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety
Administration (PHMSA)

Funding Opportunity Title: Pipeline Safety Information Grants to Communities:
Technical Assistance Grants (TAG)

Announcement Type: Initial Announcement

Funding Opportunity Number: 693JK322NF0004

Assistance Listing Program Number: 20.710

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MISSION

The mission of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT or Department) is to ensure our Nation has the safest, most efficient and modern transportation system in the world. DOT's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) protects people and the environment by advancing the safe transportation of energy and other hazardous materials that are essential to our daily lives. To do this, PHMSA establishes national policy, sets and enforces standards, educates, and conducts research to prevent incidents. We also prepare the public and first responders to reduce consequences if an incident does occur. To accomplish this, PHMSA may award grants to states, Indian Tribes, territories, localities, communities, and non-profit organizations that help make sure pipelines operate safely and shipments arrive without incident.

SECTION A – PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A.1 Statement of Purpose

Pipeline safety and associated environmental protection are a shared responsibility and informed communities play a vital role in the safety and reliability of pipeline operations. The Pipeline Safety Information Grants to Communities: Technical Assistance Grants (TAG) program (Assistance Listing 20.710) provides funding to local communities and groups of individuals for technical assistance related to pipeline safety. The program also provides opportunities that strengthen the depth and quality of public participation in the safe operation of pipelines in and around communities. Technical assistance is defined as engineering or other scientific analysis of pipeline safety issues.

A strong transportation network is critical to the functioning and growth of the American economy. Our Nation's people depend on the transportation network to move the goods that we produce and facilitate the movements of workers who are responsible for that production. When the Nation's highways, railways, and ports function well, that infrastructure connects people to jobs, increases the efficiency of delivering goods and thereby cuts the costs of doing business, reduces the burden of commuting, and improves overall well-being.

Consistent with Executive Order 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government (86 FR 7009), PHMSA's FY 2022 priority is directed towards ensuring that TAG funded activities support underserved communities. Further, in keeping with the Department's sustainability goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, PHMSA encourages applicants to outline how the project could enhance this effort.

A.2 Statute and Program Authority

The TAG program is authorized under the Protecting our Infrastructure of Pipelines and Enhancing Safety (PIPES) Act of 2020, Public Law 116-260, 49 U.S.C. § 60130 to make grants to local communities and groups of individuals (not including for-profit entities) for technical assistance relating to pipeline safety.

49 U.S.C. § 60130(d)(1) defines ‘technical assistance’ as “engineering, research, and other scientific analysis of pipeline safety issues, including the promotion of public participation on technical pipeline safety issues...”

A.3 Background

Since the inception of the TAG program, PHMSA has awarded almost \$13.8 million for 246 individual technical assistance projects. TAG awards have funded a broad range of activities, including improvement of local pipeline emergency response capabilities; improvement of safe digging or damage prevention programs; development of pipeline safety information resources; implementation of local land use planning practices that enhance pipeline safety; community and pipeline awareness campaigns; and public participation in official proceedings pertaining to pipeline safety. A summary of the TAG awards, including final reports from completed grant projects, is available at <http://primis.phmsa.dot.gov/tag>

SECTION B – FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

B.1 Funding

Subject to the availability of funds, PHMSA anticipates \$2,163,958 million will be available to support the TAG program. Grant awards under this NOFO may not exceed \$100,000 for a single recipient. In addition, the Secretary shall award \$1,000,000 to an eligible applicant through a competitive selection process for the purpose of improving the quality of technical assistance provided to communities or individuals under section 49 U.S.C. § 60130(c)(2) of the PIPES ACT of 2020. 49 U.S.C. § 60130(d)(2) defines ‘eligible applicant’ as a nonprofit entity that—(A) is a public safety advocate; (B) has pipeline safety expertise; (C) is able to provide individuals and communities with technical assistance; and (D) was established with funds designated for the purpose of community service through the implementation of section 3553 of title 18 relating to violations of this chapter.

Recipients may request up to 50 percent of the total amount of the award upon execution of the grant agreement. The remaining amount may be requested upon receipt and approval (by the PHMSA Agreement Officer) of the mid-term progress report. PHMSA may implement additional requirements for a recipient of an award over \$100,000.

B.2 Period of Performance

The period of performance is 12 months from the effective date of award for each grant. Applicants must only apply for funding that can be reasonably expended within this time frame and for projects that can be completed within the period of performance.

B.3 Type of Award

This is a discretionary grant award. If funding is made available, PHMSA intends to award multiple grants under this NOFO. The number of awards will depend on the availability of funding, the quality of applications, the number of applications received, and the dollar amounts requested. PHMSA may, at its discretion, award a grant based on the application in its entirety, award funds for only portions of a grant application, or reject the application. Submission of an

application is not a guarantee of award.

B.4 Previous Award

TAG recipients from previous years are eligible to apply for a FY 2022 TAG; however, applications should be for new projects and not for renewal or supplementation of existing projects.

SECTION C – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

C.1 Eligible Applicants

Applicants for the TAG must be local communities or groups of individuals (not including for-profit entities) related to the safety and associated environmental mitigation of pipeline facilities in local communities, other than facilities regulated under Public Law 93-153 (43 U.S.C. § 1651 et seq.). Eligible applicants include cities, towns, villages, counties, Indian Tribes, parishes, townships, and similar governmental subdivisions, or consortiums of such subdivisions, and groups of individuals; but does not include for-profit entities. States, universities, and for-profit entities **are not eligible** for TAG funding.

C.2 Cost Sharing or Matching

There are no requirements for cost-sharing or matching.

SECTION D – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

D.1 Address to Request Application Package

PHMSA requires applicants for this funding opportunity to apply electronically through www.Grants.gov. Applicants must download the application package associated with this funding opportunity by following the directions provided at www.Grants.gov. To request a hard copy of the application package, please contact:

Dwayne Cross, Agreement Officer
Acquisition Services Division
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, E22-306
Washington, DC 20590
Phone: 202-366-4429
Email: Dwayne.Cross@dot.gov

If you are a hearing-impaired person, please contact the FR/TTY at 1-800-877-8339 or email PHMSA-Accessibility@dot.gov.

Applications will only be accepted via www.Grants.gov. Mail and fax submissions will not be accepted.

The application package contains the required electronic forms/templates and provides the ability

to upload attachments for the budget narrative, project narrative, assurances, and certifications. The applicant must submit the information outlined in the application package. A copy of this NOFO and corresponding forms package can be retrieved from www.Grants.gov using the following basic search criteria:

- (1) Keyword(s): Technical Assistance Grants
- (2) NOFO#: 693JK322NF0004
- (3) Assistance Listing Number: 20.710

To begin the process, applicants must register at www.Grants.gov. It is highly recommended that applicants begin the registration process as soon as possible to avoid submission delays. **Failure to comply with the prescribed application requirements as described in this section will result in an application not being reviewed.**

Accessing Grants.gov:

For new users, go to <http://www.Grants.gov/web/grants/applicants.html>, or go to the main page at <http://www.Grants.gov/> and select “Register.” **NOTE: New user registrations for www.Grants.gov can take up to two weeks to complete.** For additional questions on how to register, contact Grants.gov support by phone at (800) 518-4726 or by email at support@grants.gov.

Accessing FedConnect:

Applicants must register with FedConnect at <https://www.fedconnect.net> for an account before submitting an application. Your organization’s Marketing Partner ID number (MPIN), which can be retrieved from SAM, is required to create an account. For instructions on how to register in FedConnect and how it works, click on the Tutorial on the FedConnect home page. For other technical issues or questions, either email fcsupport@unisonglobal.com or call us at 1-800-899-6665 option 2. The FedConnect Support Center is staffed Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., ET, except federal holidays.

D.2 Content and Form of Application Submission

Each application must consist of the following required documents:

1. Application for Federal Assistance Standard Form (SF-424)
2. Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
3. Project Narrative
4. Budget Narrative and Estimates
5. Standard Title VI/Non-Discrimination Assurances
6. Certification Regarding Lobbying

The application forms and templates are available on www.Grants.gov in the Forms Package and under the ‘Related Documents’ tab with detailed instructions on the application process.

Applicants must use Standard Form (SF) 424A through www.Grants.gov to submit their budget/cost proposal. The budget should reflect the applicant’s best terms from a cost and technical standpoint to perform the work. No fee or profit should be proposed.

D.3 Description of Cost Categories

Additional budgetary information, broken out as described below, must provide detailed information on each cost element, consistent with the applicant's cost accounting system. The amounts requested for each budget category must be justified in a Budget section under each project in applicant responses to this announcement. Budget Narratives must address the following items:

- If your budget includes **personnel costs**, please include a complete breakdown, including *personnel title/position, hourly rate, and the number of hours expected to be spent by each person* on the proposed project.
- If your proposal includes **travel costs**, please include adequate details on how the cost has been calculated including travel fare, etc.
- If your proposal includes **equipment costs**, please include adequate details on how the cost has been calculated, including information on each specific equipment piece(s) required and their individual costs.

Applications that contain a request for indirect costs should include a budget narrative detailing the proposal for indirect costs, where allowable. The budget narrative should include a signed copy of the applicant's approved negotiated rate agreement that is valid as of the date of the application, if this is not already on file with PHMSA State Programs division. If the applicant does not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement, the applicant may be eligible for the 10-percent *de minimis* rate provided by 2 CFR § 200.414.

***Further, please note that in order to comply with the requirements of 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E, and DOT's Guide to Financial Assistance, PHMSA's Agreement Officers and Grant Specialists may request additional information pertaining to your application during the application review/evaluation process. ***

- **If you are a non-profit municipal pipeline operator, your project narrative must state that the application conforms to the requirement in D.5, Funding Restrictions, pertaining to restricted uses of funding for non-profit municipal pipeline operators. Applications from non-profit municipal pipeline operators that propose activities associated with regulatory compliance or typical operations and maintenance of pipeline facilities will not be considered for award.**

Please refer to sections E.1 and E.2 for the Evaluation Criteria and Rating Guidelines, to which the Project and Budget Narratives will be evaluated.

D.4 Unique Entity Identifier (Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number) and System for Award Management (SAM)

Each applicant is required to: (i) be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid DUNS number in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active federal award or an application under consideration by PHMSA. PHMSA may not make a grant award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM

requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements by the time that PHMSA is ready to make a grant award, PHMSA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

We recommend that applicants review the SAM database to ensure that their DUNS number is updated and active: <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>. **PHMSA will review an applicant's registration status to make a responsibility determination to ensure that the applicant is responsible, current on all federal taxes, and is not on the list of parties excluded from federal awards.**

D.5 Submission Dates and Times

Complete applications must be received electronically through www.Grants.gov by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on Wednesday April 27, 2022. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered. **PHMSA will only accept one application from each applicant. Applicants awarded FY 2022 TAG funding may not subcontract with or otherwise receive TAG funding from other FY 2022 TAG recipients for purposes of performing work under the FY 2022 TAG program.**

D.6 Funding Restrictions

The funding for the TAG program may not be used for lobbying, in direct support of litigation, in direct advocacy for or against a pipeline construction or expansion project or other pipeline policy matters, or for activities associated with regulatory compliance or typical operations and maintenance of pipeline facilities as defined below.

While operators of non-profit municipal pipeline systems are considered communities and are eligible for a TAG, **the funds shall not be used for activities associated with regulatory compliance or typical operations and maintenance of pipeline facilities. This restriction includes compliance with pipeline safety integrity management regulations.**

Some examples of prohibited activities include:

- Expenses claimed and or reimbursed by another program.
- Expenses counted as match funds toward another federal program.
- Any additional costs disallowed or stated as ineligible in 2 CFR Part 200.
- One-on-one meetings and contacts with members of the Presidential Administration or Congress.
- Letters, policy reports, or recommendations sent directly to policymakers to sway policy debate or decisions.
- Billboards or advertisements aimed at attracting the attention of congressional staffers and administration officials.
- Capitol Hill briefings to converse with and educate members of Congress and their staffs.
- Hearings in congressional committees where public witnesses can testify on an issue.
- Protests, media (mainstream and social) campaigns, and letter/e-mail campaigns.
- Posting pro- or anti-pipeline advocacy documents and messages on websites developed with

grant funds.

D.7 Other Submission Requirements

PHMSA requires applicants for this funding opportunity to apply electronically through www.Grants.gov. Applicants must download the application package associated with this funding opportunity at www.Grants.gov.

Questions regarding the eligibility of specific activities may be directed to Dwayne Cross at dwayne.cross@dot.gov or (202) 366-4429.

For summaries of past TAG projects, including all final reports that have been submitted to PHMSA to date, visit <http://primis.phmsa.dot.gov/tag>. Please note that in the first two years of the TAG program (2009 and 2010), PHMSA did not explicitly prohibit the use of funds for regulatory compliance or operations and maintenance by municipal operators.

SECTION E – APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

E.1 Criteria

Consistent with the Department's R.O.U.T.E.S. Initiative (<https://www.transportation.gov/rural>), the Department recognizes that rural transportation networks face unique challenges. To the extent that those challenges are reflected in the merit criteria listed in this section, the Department will consider how the activities proposed in the application will address those challenges, regardless of the geographic location of those activities.

PHMSA will evaluate applications through administrative, technical, and programmatic reviews based on the evaluation criteria. PHMSA developed evaluation criteria to rate and select competing applications. Submission of an application is not a guarantee of award. PHMSA may, at its discretion, award a grant in full, partially, or decline to award an applicant based on the following criteria.

1. The extent to which the applicant's project scope establishes clear goals and objectives that focus on areas where a pipeline failure could pose a significant risk to people—particularly historically underserved communities—or to unusually sensitive environmental areas (see definition in 49 CFR § 195.6).
2. The extent to which the applicant's project scope identifies specific pipeline safety concerns or risks to the public—particularly historically underserved communities—to be addressed in affected geographic areas.
3. The extent to which the proposal demonstrates the applicant's experience with and/or commitment to foster open communication with stakeholders and affected communities to ensure project success.
4. The extent to which the applicant's project aligns with the challenges and strategies for advancing pipeline safety and seeks to improve performance and safety over time in areas such as engineering, damage prevention, land use planning, public awareness, education and outreach, emergency response, and community awareness.

5. The extent to which the applicant's project plan clearly establishes resources, milestones, and estimated project costs that align with project goals and objectives.
6. The extent to which the applicant's project plan identifies measurable results and deliverables and specifies how results will be evaluated and disseminated to affected stakeholders.
7. The extent to which the applicant's project scope provides the potential for learning or technology transfer to other groups and communities.

In addition, PHMSA expects the proposed results of projects to be factual, unbiased, verifiable, and repeatable to the extent practicable. Applicants should also be aware that a grant award will not convey any authority to grant recipients to secure information or cooperation from pipeline operators or access to PHMSA data or data systems.

E.2 Review and Selection Process

Administrative Review: PHMSA will conduct an administrative review to ensure the application meets the eligibility criteria outlined in Section C on Eligibility Information. Each application will be reviewed for completeness to ensure it includes all of the required elements to qualify for the grant. If the application does not meet the required elements, then the application is likely to be rejected.

Technical Review: PHMSA will conduct a technical review of the application(s) to assess how the proposed work is to be performed and whether the application(s) are responsive to the applicable program requirements (i.e., performance measurement, methodology, and technical merit). PHMSA may use outside stakeholders as part of the technical review panel. Outside stakeholder members may be comprised of pipeline safety groups with expertise in pipeline safety.

Programmatic Review: PHMSA will conduct a programmatic review to assess programmatic factors. Programmatic factors are relevant and essential to the process of selecting applications that best achieve the program objectives, in accordance with applicable statutes, regulations, policies, and guidelines. Programmatic factors may include history of performance, Administration priorities, program priorities, and other modal needs.

When reviewing applications, PHMSA will also consider the following key DOT objectives:

- (A) Safety: PHMSA will assess the project's ability to foster a safe pipeline transportation system for the movement of energy, consistent with the Department's strategic goal to reduce transportation related fatalities and serious injuries across the pipeline transportation system.
- (B) Equity: PHMSA will assess the project's ability to encourage equity by investing in projects that proactively mitigate safety risks in underserved communities.
- (C) Climate Change: PHMSA will assess the project's ability to address the harmful effects of excavation damage to pipeline facilities by considering the extent to which projects can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and polluted waterways.

In determining the allocation of program funds, PHMSA may also consider geographic diversity, funding, and the applicant's receipt of other competitive awards.

Based on the results from each review, each application will receive an overall rating either as:

Highly Recommended. The application demonstrates that the NOFO requirements are very well understood and the approach will likely result in a very high-quality performance. The application clearly addresses and exceeds requirements with no weaknesses. The application contains outstanding features that meet or exceed on multiple dimensions the expectations of the government. The application scope aligns very well with DOT objectives and priorities. The risk of poor performance is very low.

Recommended. The application demonstrates that the NOFO requirements are understood and the approach will likely result in satisfactory performance. The application addresses and meets requirements with some minor but correctable weaknesses. The application demonstrates requisite experience, qualifications, and performance capabilities. The application scope aligns with DOT objectives and priorities. The risk of poor performance is low.

Acceptable. The application demonstrates that the NOFO requirements are mostly understood and the approach will likely result in satisfactory performance for part of the requirements. The application addresses some of the requirements with some weaknesses. The application demonstrates some experience, qualifications, and/or performance capabilities. The application partially aligns with DOT objectives and priorities. The risk of poor performance is moderate.

Not Acceptable. The application does not meet the NOFO requirements. The application fails to address many requirements. The applicant may be ineligible to apply for the grant. The application could not satisfy critical requirements without a major revision and/or a rewrite of the application or a major redirection effort. The application scope does not align with DOT objectives and priorities. The risk of poor performance is high.

Selection Process

PHMSA will recommend applications for award based on the final overall rating as described above. Final award recommendations will be made by PHMSA's Associate Administrator for the Office of Pipeline Safety after taking into consideration recommendations made during the administrative, technical, and programmatic reviews and how well the applications address PHMSA's and DOT's priorities. The PHMSA Administrator will make final award selection decisions.

SECTION F – FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

F.1 Federal Award Notices

PHMSA's awarding official will make grants to those responsible, eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this NOFO. All funds provided by PHMSA must be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, regulations, terms and

conditions of the award, applicable federal cost principles, and DOT financial assistance regulations.

The grant award agreement, signed by both the PHMSA Agreement Officer and the recipient's Authorized Representative, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic means to the Authorized Representative. The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum, the following:

1. The legal name and address of the recipient.
2. Title of project.
3. Name(s) of key personnel chosen to direct and control approved activities.
4. Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN) assigned by PHMSA.
5. Period of performance.
6. Total amount of financial assistance approved for the project.
7. Legal authority(ies) under which the award is issued.
8. Assistance Listing Program Number (formerly CFDA).
9. Applicable award terms and conditions.
10. Approved budget including category of spending.
11. Other information or provisions deemed necessary by PHMSA.

F.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Several federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and award under this program. See "Terms and Conditions" of this NOFO for a list of statutes and regulations that are applicable. Standard Title VI/Non-Discrimination Assurances for the form by the same name that must be completed and returned by the grant applicant.

F.3 Reporting Requirements

Minimum reporting requirements are listed below, and PHMSA may implement additional requirements which will be outlined in the award agreement for any recipient of an award over \$100,000.

Mid-Year Report(s) – Each grant recipient is required to submit a mid-year Federal Financial Report (Standard Form [SF]-425) and a progress report six months after the effective date of the grant award. The reports are to be submitted via email to the Agreement Officer and Agreement Officer Representative; contact information will be available in the grant award. Progress reports must follow the instructions outlined in the terms and conditions of the grant award and must include:

1. A comparison of actual accomplishments to the objectives established for the period;
2. Where the output of the project can be quantified, a computation of the cost per unit of output; and,
3. Challenges and/or the reasons for delays if established objectives were not met.

Final Reports – Grant recipient is required to submit a final Federal Financial Report (SF-425) and final progress report no later than 90 days after the performance period has ended. The

reports are to be submitted via email to the Agreement Officer and Agreement Officer Representative; contact information will be available in the grant award.

The final progress report must follow the instructions outlined in the terms and conditions of the grant award and must include:

1. A comparison of actual accomplishments to the objectives established for the period;
2. Where the output of the project can be quantified, a computation of the cost per unit of output;
3. The reasons for delays or missed milestones, if established objectives were not met; and
4. Documentation of actual expenses and detailed cost breakdown to support SF-425 submission.

In addition, each recipient of a grant must ensure that:

1. The technical findings made possible by the grants are made available to the relevant pipeline operators; and,
2. Open communication is maintained between the grant recipients, local operators, local communities, and other interested parties.

In total, four reports (a mid-term progress report, a mid-term financial status report, a final progress report, and a final financial report) are required. Standard Form 425 must be used for submission of the mid-term and final financial status reports. All applications and reports will be made available to the public upon request.

SECTION G – FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

***All questions related to the content of this funding opportunity MUST be submitted via the Message Center in FedConnect. Please do not send questions via e-mail. ***

For technical issues or questions related to FedConnect, please email fcsupport@unisonglobal.com; applicant can also submit questions through the portal on their website, or call 1-800-899-6665 option 2.

Point of Contact

Dwayne Cross, Agreement Officer (AO)
Acquisition Services Division
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, E22-306
Washington, DC 20590
Phone: (202) 366-4429
Email: dwayne.cross@dot.gov

Grants.gov Questions

Grants.gov Contact Center

Phone: (800) 518-4726

E-mail: support@grants.gov

SECTION H – OTHER INFORMATION

Given the complexity of some aspects of the application process, technical assistance is available to rural applicants and inexperienced or under-resourced applicants to help with the application process. Please contact the technical primary point of contact listed in Section G for technical assistance.