



**U.S. Department
of Transportation**
Pipeline and
Hazardous Materials
Safety Administration
(PHMSA)

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Hazardous Materials Instructor Training Grants

Fiscal Year (FY) 2021

NOFO Posted Date: January 13, 2021
Applications Due Date: March 9, 2021, 11:59 pm ET
Questions Due Date: February 23, 2021, 11:59 pm ET

Applicant must be registered 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 an active registration in the System for Award Management 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 to use the portal, view the *FedConnect: Ready, Set, Go! Tutorial* under the *Need Help?* section on the FedConnect home page.

Assistance Listing (formerly CFDA)

20.703 "Interagency Hazardous Materials Public Sector Training and Planning Grants"

PHMSA Notice of Funding Opportunity Number
693JK321NF0010

Contents

MISSION	4
SECTION A - PROGRAM DESCRIPTION.....	4
A.1 Statement of Purpose.....	4
A.2 Statute and Program Authority.....	5
A.3 Background	5
SECTION B - FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION	5
B.1 Funding.....	5
B.2 Period of Performance.....	5
B.3 Type of Award	6
B.4 Previous Awards	6
SECTION C - ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION	6
C.1 Eligible Applicants.....	6
C.2 Cost Sharing or Matching	7
SECTION D - APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION	7
D.1 Address to Request Application Package.....	7
D.2 Content and Form of Application Submission.....	8
D.3 Unique Entity Identifier (Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number) and System for Award Management (SAM).....	13
D.4 Submission Dates and Times	14
D.5 Funding Restrictions	14
SECTION E - APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION	14
E.1 Criteria.....	14
E.2 Review and Selection Process.....	16
E.3 FAPIIS Review	17
E.4 Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates	17
SECTION F - FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION	17
F.1 Federal Award Notices.....	17
F.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements.....	18
F.3 Reporting Requirements.....	19
SECTION G - FEDERAL AWARDED AGENCY CONTACTS.....	20
SECTION H – OTHER INFORMATION	20

PROGRAM SUMMARY

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

Funding Opportunity Title: “Hazardous Materials Instructor Training Grants –
FY 2021”

Announcement Type: Initial Announcement

Funding Opportunity Number: 693JK321NF0010

CFDA Number: 20.703

NOFO Posted Date: January 12, 2021
Application Due Date: March 9, 2021, 11:59 pm ET
Question Due Date: February 23, 2021, 11:59 pm ET

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, the agency 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 awards grants to States, tribes, territories, localities, communities, and nonprofits that help make sure pipelines operate safely and shipments arrive without incident.

SECTION A - PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A.1 Statement of Purpose

This funding opportunity is associated with Assistance Listing 20.703. PHMSA, through this grant opportunity, solicits competitive applications from eligible nonprofit organizations for Hazardous Materials Instructor Training (HMIT) grant funds. For award consideration, nonprofit organizations must demonstrate expertise in conducting training programs for hazmat employees, and the ability to reach and involve in a training program a target population of hazmat employees. Properly planned and maintained training programs are essential for hazmat employees to ensure: (1) Hazmat employees receive initial and continuing training on the risks involved in transporting hazardous materials; (2) the relevant training requirements in the Hazardous Materials Regulation (HMR) are met; and (3) hazmat employees will be equipped to ensure their safety and the safety of others. Effective training of employees can reduce risk and the likelihood of hazmat incidents and accidents, and is key to ensuring that hazardous materials are transported safely.

Funding under this award is critical to ensuring the safe transportation of hazardous materials by training hazmat employees and hazmat employee instructors. PHMSA's goal is to ensure the safe handling of hazardous materials in the workplace. The HMIT grant is a critical component of PHMSA's safety mission and strategic plan because it increases the number of instructors qualified to train hazmat employees. An increase in the number of hazmat employee instructors is vital because it exponentially increases the number of hazmat employees qualified to safely handle hazardous materials.

PHMSA requires that applicants identify specific training projects based on needs and maintain a record of the following: 1) number trained, 2) course type, 3) cost of training, 4) location of training, and 5) a detailed accounting and description of each grant expenditure, including the amount of, and purpose for, each expenditure. PHMSA measures performance based on the projects included in the approved grant application and whether those projects fulfilled the training needs outlined in the statement of need.

A strong transportation network is critical to the functioning and growth of the American economy. The Nation's industry depends on the transportation network to move the goods that it produces, and facilitate the movements of the 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.

Rural transportation networks play a vital role in supporting our national economic vitality. Addressing the deteriorating conditions and disproportionately high fatality rates on our rural transportation infrastructure is of critical interest to the Department, as rural transportation networks face unique challenges in safety, infrastructure condition, and passenger and freight usage. Consistent with the Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (R.O.U.T.E.S.) Initiative, the Department encourages applicants to consider how the project will address the challenges faced by rural areas in advancing pipeline and hazardous materials (hazmat) transportation safety.

A.2 Statute and Program Authority

The Hazardous Materials Instructor Training (HMIT) Grant program was initially authorized under the Hazardous Materials Transportation Safety and Security Reauthorization Act of 2005 (P. L. 109-59), codified at 49 U.S.C. § 5107(e).

A.3 Background

Pursuant to 49 U.S.C § 5107(e), the HMIT Grant program provides grants to nonprofit organizations to institute "train the trainer" programs whereby hazmat instructors are trained to deliver training to private sector hazmat employees involved with the transportation of hazardous materials. The core objective of the HMIT Grant program is to facilitate delivery of hazmat training to instructors on how to train hazmat employees on the requirements of the HMR, 49 CFR Chapter I, Subchapter C.

SECTION B - FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

B.1 Funding

This NOFO is subject to the availability of funds. PHMSA anticipates up to \$4,554,771 will be made available to support the HMIT grant program. The expected amounts of individual Federal awards for organizations range from \$250,000 to \$1,000,000.

B.2 Period of Performance

The period of performance is a minimum of 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. An applicant may request a period of performance up to 24 months.

B.3 Type of Award

Discretionary grant award.

B.4 Previous Awards

Applicants who received a previous PHMSA HMIT grant award may also apply for a FY 2021 HMIT grant.

SECTION C - ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

C.1 Eligible Applicants

The FY 2021 HMIT grant program is open to nonprofit organizations that demonstrate expertise in conducting a training program for existing hazmat employees; and the ability to reach and involve in a training program a target population of hazmat employees.

For the purposes of the HMIT grants program, a nonprofit organization is a business that has been granted tax-exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) because it furthers a social cause and provides a public benefit.

Non-profit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible applicants. "For profit" organizations are not eligible applicants for the HMIT grant program.

Hazmat employee, as defined at 49 U.S.C § 5102(3) and at 49 CFR § 171.8 means a person who:

- (1) Is employed on a full-time, part-time, or temporary basis by a hazmat employer and who in the course of such full-time, part-time or temporary employment directly affects hazardous materials transportation safety;
- (2) Is self-employed (including an owner-operator of a motor vehicle, vessel or aircraft) transporting hazardous materials in commerce who in the course of such self-employment directly affects hazardous materials transportation safety;
- (3) Is a railroad signalman;
- (4) Is a railroad maintenance-of-way employee; or
- (5) Is employed on a full-time, part-time, or temporary basis by a hazmat employer, or who is self-employed, who during the course of employment:
 - a. Loads, unloads, or handles hazardous materials;
 - b. Designs, manufactures, fabricates, inspects, marks, maintains, reconditions, repairs, or tests a package, container or packaging component that is represented, marked, certified, or sold as qualified for use in transporting hazardous material in commerce.
 - c. Prepares hazardous materials for transportation;
 - d. Is responsible for safety of transporting hazardous materials; or
 - e. Operates a vehicle used to transport hazardous materials.

Hazmat employer, as defined at 49 U.S.C § 5102(4), means a person:

- (1) that employs or uses at least one hazmat employee on a full-time, part-time, or temporary basis; and who:
 - a. Transports hazardous materials in commerce;
 - b. Causes hazardous materials to be transported in commerce; or
 - c. Designs, manufactures, fabricates, inspects, marks, maintains, reconditions, repairs or tests a package, container, or packaging component that is represented, marked, certified, or sold by that person as qualified for use in transporting hazardous materials in commerce;
- (2) A person who is self-employed (including an owner-operator of a motor vehicle, vessel, or aircraft) transporting materials in commerce; and who:
 - a. Transports hazardous materials in commerce;
 - b. Causes hazardous materials to be transported in commerce; or
 - c. Designs, manufactures, fabricates, inspects, marks, maintains, reconditions, repairs or tests a package, container, or packaging component that is represented, marked, certified, or sold by that person as qualified for use in transporting hazardous materials in commerce; or
- (3) A department, agency, or instrumentality of the U.S. Government, or an authority of a State, political subdivision of a State, or an Indian tribe; and who:
 - a. Transports hazardous materials in commerce;
 - b. Causes hazardous materials to be transported in commerce; or
 - c. Designs, manufactures, fabricates, inspects, marks, maintains, reconditions, repairs or tests a package, container, or packaging component that is represented, marked, certified or sold by that person as qualified for use in transporting hazardous materials in commerce.

C.2 Cost Sharing or Matching

There are no cost-sharing or matching requirements for this grant program.

SECTION D - APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

D.1 Address to Request Application Package

PHMSA requires applicants for this funding opportunity to apply electronically through Grants.gov. Applicants must download the application package associated with this funding opportunity by following the directions provided on Grants.gov.

To request a hard copy of the application package, please contact:

Carla Sheppard
 Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
 1200 New Jersey Ave. SE, E23-446
 Washington, DC 20590
 Email: HMIT.grants@dot.gov

Phone: (202) 366-1109
FAX: (202) 366-3753

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

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

The application package contains the required electronic forms and the ability to upload attachments for the budget narrative, budget justification, project narrative, assurances, and certifications. The applicant must submit the information outlined in the Application Guide in addition to the program-specific information below.

To begin the process, applicants must be registered with www.Grants.gov to submit an application. It is highly recommended that applicants begin the registration process as soon as possible to avoid delays with submission. Failure to comply with the prescribed application requirements as described in this section may 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 Grants.gov can take up to two weeks to complete. For additional questions on how to register, contact Grants.gov support by phone at 1-800-518-4726 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 to use the portal, view the FedConnect: Ready, Set, Go! Tutorial under the Need Help? section 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

Consistent with the Department's R.O.U.T.E.S. Initiative (<https://www.transportation.gov/rural>), the Department requests that applicants describe how activities proposed in their application would address the unique challenges facing rural transportation networks, regardless of the geographic location of those activities.

Applications should be well written and free of mathematical errors in the line-item budget and budget narrative. Program narratives should have the sections clearly identified and follow the structure requested in this NOFO.

Applications for FY 2021 HMIT grant funding should be submitted in electronic format to Grants.gov according to the following outline. There are two overall sections: (1) standard forms that the applicant must download and complete from Grants.gov under the FY 2021 Hazardous Materials Instructor Training grant funding opportunity; and (2) attachments the applicant will need to create and upload.

1. Standard Forms

The following forms are found in Grants.gov under the FY 2021 HMIT Grant Funding Opportunity and must be completed by the applicant.

- a) Standard Form (SF)-424 – Application for Federal assistance
- b) SF-424A – Budget Information
- c) ED-80-0013 – Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension, Drug-Free Workplace, etc.
- d) Standard Title VI/Non-Discrimination Assurances – Civil Rights Assurances

2. Applicant Attachments

All required forms must be created by the applicant and uploaded to Grants.gov under the FY 2021 Hazardous Materials Instructor Training Grant Funding Opportunity. Guidance for submitting the project narrative and budget narrative is listed in the following section.

- a) Project Narrative attachment
- b) Budget Narrative attachment
- c) Indirect cost agreement (if applicable)
- d) Letters of Support from partner organizations (if applicable)
- e) Additional attachments (if applicable)

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

3. Project Narrative

The following Project Narrative sections are required. To facilitate the application review and award process, submit the sections in the order of their appearance as stated below. Applicants should clearly identify the sections in the project narrative section of the application.

- a) **Organization information and capacity.** Briefly provide information about your organization. This should include: (1) your organization’s mission; (2) a brief overview of the structure of your organization, programs, leadership, and special expertise; and (3) your organization’s experience and capacity to manage Federal grant programs – with emphasis on experience managing Federal grants related to train-the-trainer and direct training for employees involved in the transportation of hazardous materials. If your

application proposes to partner with another nonprofit organization, a letter of support is required with your application.

- b) **Contact information.** Identify the designated project director, including the name, position, address, email address, and telephone number of the individual(s) who will be responsible for coordinating the funded activities. Additionally, identify authorized individuals who will accept the awarded grant document, as well as individuals responsible for the submission of required Federal financial reports and progress reports.
- c) **Statement of need.** (1) Describe the needs and gaps for the training of instructors to train employees working in the field of transportation of hazardous materials, including the needs of rural hazmat employees. The level of need may be described using quantitative and qualitative information preferably based upon macro-level national data, or specific examples of locations with deficiencies in hazmat training, or a combination of both. (2) Briefly explain how the proposed activities will help to address the identified needs.
- d) **Proposed training activities and timeline.** Describe the proposed training activities for the HMIT grant. Include a clear timeline of forecasted dates for projected events. This section should include: (1) the type of training activities proposed; (2) the location of the activities; (3) state whether the activities are located in a Qualified Opportunity Zone designated pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 1400Z-1; (4) a plan for training hazmat employees in rural areas; and (5) the timeframe when the activity will take place. The timeline should include benchmarks and milestones that will assist with monitoring the project's success. Additionally, any training curriculum or instructor development activities should be described and included in the timeline of events.
- e) **Curriculum.** Provide any training curriculum that will be used for training or a detailed description of the curriculum. If you have submitted a curriculum the prior year and no changes have been made to the curriculum, you must indicate this in this section. If a curriculum will be developed during the grant's period of performance, provide a detailed description of the curriculum that will be developed and an estimated timeline for curriculum development.
- f) **Projected outputs and objectives.** Provide quantifiable and measurable outputs planned for the grant's period of performance. Outputs are quantitative data that describe the proposed activities. For delivery of hazmat training courses, outputs should include: (1) number and type of course(s); (2) the number of projected students trained for each course; and (3) number of contact hours for each course. Additionally, broader outcomes or goals may be provided to describe the intended impact of the proposed outputs. This can be either quantitative or qualitative, and should reflect the projected impact of the grant activity outputs.
- g) **Monitoring and evaluation of training.** Provide an explanation of monitoring efforts, internal controls and quality assurance plan to ensure grant program success. These may include, but are not limited to, random examinations, inspections, and audits of training to maximize the cost effectiveness and impact of the program.

4. Budget Narrative

The budget narrative is an explanation of each budget component, which supports the costs of the proposed work. The budget narrative should focus on how each budget item is required to achieve the proposed project goals and objectives. It should also justify how budget costs were

calculated. The budget narrative should be clear, specific, detailed, mathematically correct, and correspond to the SF-424A line-item categories.

Provide a budget narrative justification by Object Class that corresponds to the amount listed on the SF-424A and why the amount is needed to implement the project as proposed in the project narrative. The budget narrative must correspond with the costs identified in the SF-424A line item budget, and vice versa.

A well-developed budget narrative is an effective monitoring tool for both the awarding agency and grant recipient. However, a budget narrative that does not represent a project's needs makes it difficult to recommend for full funding and to assess financial performance over the life of the project. A description of the object class categories is provided below:

- a) **Personnel** costs are the employee salaries working directly on the grant project. Include the number, type of personnel, the percentage of time dedicated to the project, hourly wage (or salary) and total cost to the grant. At least 75 percent of grant funding must be used for HMIT programmatic activities, no more than 25 percent of Federal funding may be used for maintenance and administration costs (M&A). This does not include indirect costs.
 - This category is limited to only persons employed by your organization. Those not employed by your agency shall be classified as subrecipients or contractors and should be listed under the "Contractual" or "Other" object class.
 - Only include the compensation paid to employees engaged in grant activities.
 - The costs should be consistent with that paid for similar types of work within the organization.
 - Applicants should breakout agency staff who directly carry out training activities to ensure the 25 percent administrative cap does not include these costs.
- b) **Fringe benefit** costs are the allowances and services provided by employers to their employees as compensation in addition to regular salaries and wages. Fringe costs are benefits paid to employees, including the cost of employer's share of FICA, health insurance, workers' compensation, and leave. Include how the fringe benefit amount is calculated (i.e., actual fringe benefits estimate, approved rate, etc.). Include a description of specific benefits charged to a project and the benefit percentage. Additional considerations:
 - The personnel/salaries should have corresponding fringe; and vice-versa. PHMSA cannot pay fringe benefits for a position that is not listed in the Personnel section.
 - Explain what is included in the benefit package and at what percentage.
 - Fringe benefits are only for the percentage of time devoted to the grant project.
 - The applicant must not combine the fringe benefit costs with direct salaries and wages in the personnel category.
- c) **Travel** costs are those costs for transportation, lodging, subsistence, and related items requested for field work or for travel to professional meetings associated with grant activities. Provide the purpose, method of travel, number of persons traveling, number of

days, and estimated cost for each trip. If the details of each trip are not known at the time of application submission, provide the basis for determining the amount requested.

- d) **Equipment** costs include those items which are tangible, nonexpendable, personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit, unless the applicant has a clear and consistent written policy that determines a different threshold. Equipment costs must comply with 2 CFR § 200.439. Include a description, quantity and unit price for all equipment.
- Purchases of less than \$5,000 should be listed under “Supplies” or “Other.”
 - Each item of equipment must be identified with the corresponding cost. General-purpose equipment must be justified as to how it will be used on the project.
 - Analyze the cost benefits of purchasing versus leasing equipment, particularly high-cost items and those subject to rapid technical advances. List rented or leased equipment costs in the “Contractual” or “Other” category, depending upon the procurement method.
- e) **Supplies** are tangible personal property other than equipment necessary to carry out the Federal award. Include the types of property in general terms. It is not necessary to document office supplies in detail (for example: reams of paper, boxes of paperclips, etc.). However, applicants should include a quantity and unit cost for larger cost supply items such as computers and printers.
- f) **Contractual** costs are those services carried out by an individual or organization, other than the applicant, in the form of a procurement relationship or subaward (subgrant). There are two ways to capture costs in this category: subgrants and contracts.
- A **Subaward (Subgrant)** is an award provided by a pass-through entity (Grantee/Recipient) to a subrecipient. That subrecipient carries out part of a program for which the Grantee/Recipient received Federal support. A subrecipient has its performance measured in relation to whether objectives of a Federal program were met; has responsibility for programmatic decision making; is responsible for adherence to applicable Federal program requirements specified in the Federal award; and (in accordance with its agreement), uses the Federal funds to carry out a program for a public purpose specified in authorizing statute, as opposed to providing goods or services for the benefit of the pass-through entity.
 - A **Contract** is a legal instrument by which a Grantee/Recipient purchases property or services needed to carry out the project or program under an award. A contract/contractor provides the goods and services within normal business operations; provides similar goods or services to many different purchasers; normally operates in a competitive environment; and provides goods or services that are ancillary to the operation of the Federal program.

When procuring goods or services, a grantee/recipient under a Federal award must follow the procurement standards of the 2 CFR Part 200 including Appendix II. All procurement transactions must be a full and open competition unless the application demonstrates that one of the exceptions for procurement by noncompetitive proposals is met. If applicants plan to subcontract part of the award to another organization(s), the

application must reflect that procurement standards were complied with or provide a statement verifying that upon award, the organization will fully comply with procurement standards outlined in 2 CFR Part 200.

For all contractual line-item costs, include rationale for the costs; include the specific contract goods and/or services provided; and the related expenses for those goods and services. Simply entering the statement “contractual services” will not be considered sufficient.

- g) **Other** costs that do not fit any of the aforementioned categories, such as rent for buildings used to conduct project activities, utilities, leased equipment, employee training tuition, etc. “Other” direct costs must be itemized.
- h) **Indirect** costs (if applicable, must include IDC agreement or statement claiming de minimis rate) are allowable in the HMIT grant. Indirect costs are incurred for common or joint objectives that benefit more than one project and are not readily assignable to one project, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved. The applicant must include a current and fully executed indirect cost rate agreement in the application if claiming indirect costs. The rate must be applied to the appropriate base in the approved agreement. If the rate will not be approved by the application due date, attach the letter of renewal or letter of request that you sent to your cognizant agency to your application. If the applicant has never received indirect cost rate agreement, the applicant may elect to charge 10 percent de minimis rate provided by 2 CFR § 200.414(f). A non-profit entity that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs (MTDC), per 2 CFR § 200.414, which may be used indefinitely. Applicants intending to charge the de minimis rate must include a statement verifying that the organization has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate and that the organization has elected to charge the de minimis rate.
- i) **Match:** Not applicable for the HMIT grant program.

*****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 and evaluation process. *****

D.3 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 (SAM.gov) before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid DUNS number in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration and DUNS with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application under consideration.

PHMSA may not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied

with the requirements by the time the PHMSA is ready to make an 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.

Note: PHMSA recommends that applicants review the SAM database to ensure that their DUNS number is updated and active. Link: <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>

D.4 Submission Dates and Times

Completed applications must be received electronically by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time March 9, 2021. If an applicant has technical difficulties submitting the application through Grants.gov, please contact the Grants Program Office, Phone: (202) 366-1109 or Email: HMIT.Grants@dot.gov. Applications received after this deadline may not be considered.

D.5 Funding Restrictions

The following costs are not eligible for reimbursement under the FY 2021 Hazardous Materials Instructor Training Grant Program:

- a) Overtime pay, backfill, stipends, and fees for the State and local personnel receiving training.
- b) Entertainment, alcohol, or morale costs.
- c) Excessive costs for general office supplies, equipment, computer software, printing, and copying.
- d) Any additional costs disallowed or stated as ineligible in 2 CFR Part 200.

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 based on an application in its entirety, award only portions of a grant based on its application, or not award a grant at all.

1. Technical Criteria

PHMSA will use the following evaluation criteria to determine how the applications address the needs for outreach and training:

- a) Is the training consistent with current regulations in 49 CFR Parts 100 through 180?
- b) Does the training include recognizing and identifying hazardous materials?
- c) Does the training include methods and procedures for responding to hazmat incidents, such as the proper procedures for handling packages containing hazardous materials?
- d) Does application show the ability for the applicant to deliver a successful train-the-trainer course for hazmat employees?

2. Programmatic Criteria

Applications will be evaluated against the following evaluation criteria:

- a) Does the applicant demonstrate expertise in conducting a training program for hazmat employees?
- b) Does the applicant have the capacity to reach and involve in a training program a target population of hazmat employees?
- c) Does the applicant provide a detailed needs assessment to identify gaps in training to hazmat employees and include macro-level national data with references to quantitative and qualitative information?
- d) Does the applicant's project narrative activities address the gaps found in the needs assessment?
- e) Does the applicant's program activities appear to be allowable, allocable, necessary, and reasonable?
- f) Does the applicant provide approximate timeline that clearly communicates when project activities will take place?
- g) Does the application follow the train-the-trainer model, as listed as a priority in the funding announcement?
- h) Does the application list clear outputs, goals and objectives that indicates the grant will have a projected impact on reducing risk and enhancing hazmat transportation safety?
- i) Does the application appear to be cost effective with reasonable training cost/individual?
- j) Does the applicant outline a monitoring and evaluation strategy to help ensure that the project will be successful? and
- k) Is the project(s) located in a Qualified Opportunity Zone designated pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 1400Z-1?
- l) Does applicant describe how proposed activities would address the unique challenges facing rural transportation regardless of the geographic location of those activities?
- m) Did applicant provide a completed SF-424 form?
- n) Is the SF-424A budget completed and properly filled out?
- o) Did applicant submit a completed ED-80-0013 combined assurance and Title VI form?
- p) Does the budget (SF-424A) and budget narrative align?
- q) Does the budget narrative provide detail as to how the costs under Personnel correspond to the staff included in the narrative, and how they were calculated?
- r) Does the budget narrative provide an explanation or breakout of the staff Fringe Benefits?

- s) If there are funds entered under Travel, does the budget narrative provide a clear and reasonable explanation that relates to the costs?
- t) Does the budget narrative identify supply cost, are the costs adequately explained?
- u) If there are funds under Contractual, does the budget narrative clearly describe how contractual costs were derived for each agreement or subaward?
- v) If there are costs under “Other” have the costs been reasonably explained?
- w) If indirect costs are requested, does the application/budget narrative include an approved, current Indirect Cost Rate agreement or statement claiming the 10% de minimis rate?

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 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 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 reserves the right to use outside expertise to perform application evaluation.

PHMSA will utilize the technical review criteria in Section E.1 to determine how the applications address the needs for outreach and training.

Programmatic Review: PHMSA will conduct a programmatic review to assess programmatic factors identified in Section E.1. Programmatic factors are those factors which 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. Other programmatic factors may include history of performance, program priorities, and other modal needs. For applicants with existing awards, PHMSA may consider award balances when making final funding decisions.

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

Rating Guideline
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 the 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 the 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 the 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 the 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 the PHMSA Administrator after taking into consideration recommendations made during the administrative, technical, and programmatic reviews and how well the applications address PHMSA's safety priorities. The Secretary of Transportation will make final award selection decisions.

E.3 FAPIIS Review

Prior to making an award, PHMSA is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. § 2313). An applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM, and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered. PHMSA will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.205.

E.4 Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Applicants chosen for funding will receive electronic notification of the Federal award. Upon notification, the applicant's authorized official must sign and return the award within the timeframe prescribed by PHMSA. PHMSA plans to make awards by September 30, 2021, with a proposed period of performance start date of September 30, 2021.

SECTION F - FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

F.1 Federal Award Notices

PHMSA's grant awarding official will award grants to responsible and eligible applicants, subject to the availability of funding, at its discretion, 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 awarded in accordance with the approved application and budget, regulations, terms and conditions of the award, applicable Federal cost principles, and the Department's financial assistance regulations. Funds may not be used for lobbying or litigation.

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:

- a) The legal name and address of recipient;
- b) Title of project;
- c) Name(s) of key personnel chosen to direct and control approved activities;
- d) Federal Award Identification Number assigned by PHMSA;
- e) Period of Performance, specifying the duration of the project;
- f) Amount PHMSA approved for the project;
- g) Legal authority(ies) under which the award is issued;
- h) Assistance Listing Program Number (formerly CFDA);
- i) Applicable award terms and conditions;
- j) Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the award; and
- k) Other information or provisions deemed necessary by PHMSA.

F.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The administration of this award by PHMSA and the Recipient will be based on the following Federal statutory and regulatory requirements:

- a) The authorizing language of 49 U.S.C. § 5107(e).
- b) 2 CFR Part 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.
- c) The Recipient must comply with 49 CFR Part 20, "New Restrictions on Lobbying." 49 CFR Part 20 will be incorporated by reference into any award under this program and is available at www.gpoaccess.gov/ecfr/ by clicking on Title 49 CFR Part 20.
- d) The Recipient must comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which provides that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.
- e) The Recipient must comply with 49 CFR Part 21, "Nondiscrimination in Federally-Assisted Programs of the Department of Transportation—Effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964." 49 CFR Part 21 will be incorporated by reference into any award under this program and is available at: www.gpoaccess.gov/ecfr/ by clicking on Title 49 CFR Part 21.
- f) The Recipient must comply with 49 CFR Part 32, "Government wide Requirements for Drug- Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)," which implements the requirements of Public Law 100-690, Title Subtitle D, "Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988." 49 CFR Part

32 will be incorporated by reference into any award under this program and is available at: www.gpoaccess.gov/ecfr/ by clicking on Title 49 CFR Part 32.

F.3 Reporting Requirements

Bi-Annual Reports - Each grant recipient is required to submit a bi-annual Federal financial report (SF-425) and a bi-annual progress report. Bi-annual financial and progress reports are to be submitted via email at HMIT.grants@dot.gov. The reports are due no later than 30 days after the project period end date. Progress reports must follow the instructions outlined in the terms and conditions of the grant award and must include:

- a) A summary of the activities and outputs that have taken place during the reporting period. This should include, at a minimum, the number of courses delivered during the period of performance, along with the number of students trained, the city and State where the training took place, total contact hours for each class, and the employer of the students trained.
- b) The challenges the grantee has faced and strategies implemented to mitigate those challenges.
- c) An updated timeline of grant activities projected to take place for the remainder of the grant period of performance.
- d) As available, impact statements or analysis from instructors, public sector responders or other stakeholders regarding the impact current period of performance grant activities have had on protecting people and the environment from the risks of hazardous materials transportation.

Final Reports - Each recipient is required to submit a final progress report and final Federal financial report (Final SF-425). Final financial reports and progress reports are submitted by email at HMIT.grants@dot.gov. The reports are due no later than 90 days after the performance period has ended. Final reports are to be submitted via email and must follow the instructions outlined in the terms and conditions of the grant award, and must include:

- a) A summary of the activities and outputs that took place during the period of performance. This should include the total number and type of courses delivered during the period of performance, along with the number of students trained, the city and State where the training took place and total contact hours for each class. Final reports should also include a list of employers who represent the students trained. If the projected outputs listed in the approved project narrative were not met, an explanation should be provided.
- b) Challenges the grantee faced, and strategies taken to mitigate such challenges.
- c) A completed timeline of the activities that took place during the completed period of performance.
- d) As available, impact statements or analysis from training instructors, public sector responders or other stakeholders regarding the impact current period of performance grant activities have had on protecting people and the environment from the risks of hazardous materials transportation.

All applications and reports will be made available to the public upon request.

SECTION G - FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

Questions related to the content of this funding opportunity should be submitted via the Message Center in FedConnect. For technical issues or questions related to FedConnect, please email fcsupport@unisonglobal.com; applicant can submit questions through the portal on their website, or call 1-800-899-6665 option 2.

Agreement Administrator

Dwayne Cross
Phone: (202) 366-4429
Dwayne.Cross@dot.gov

Program Contact

Carla Sheppard
Phone: (202) 366-1109
Email: Carla.Sheppard@dot.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 program point of contact listed in Section G for technical assistance.