



Fiscal Year (FY) 2026

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Assistance for Local Emergency Response Training (ALERT) Grant Program

NOFO Posted Date: May 18, 2026
Applications Due Date: June 19, 2026, 11:59 p.m. EST
Questions Due Date: June 17, 2026, 11:59 p.m. EST

Applicants 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. In addition, applicants must maintain an active registration in the System for Award Management at www.SAM.gov.

Furthermore, applicants must register for an account with FedConnect at <https://www.fedconnect.net> before applying. FedConnect is a messaging platform where applicants can communicate directly with PHMSA. 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)

20.709 "Assistance for Local Emergency Response Training (ALERT)"

PHMSA Notice of Funding Opportunity Number

693JK326NF0010

U.S. Department of
Transportation

Pipeline and
Hazardous Materials
Safety Administration

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION A - BASIC INFORMATION 3

A.1 Funding 3

A.2 Period of Performance 3

A.3 Type of Award 4

SECTION B - ELIGIBILITY 4

B.1 Eligible Applicants 4

B.2 Cost Sharing or Matching 4

B.3 Funding Restrictions 5

SECTION C – PROGRAM DESCRIPTION..... 5

C.1 Statement of Purpose 5

C.2 Statute and Program Authority 6

SECTION D - APPLICATION CONTENTS AND FORMAT 6

D.1 Address to Request Application Package 6

D.2 Content and Form of Application Submission 6

SECTION E – SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES..... 7

E.1 Submission Dates and Times 7

E.2 Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM) 8

SECTION F - APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION 9

F.1 Criteria 9

F.2 Review and Selection Process..... 11

F.3 Risk Review..... 11

SECTION G - AWARD NOTICES 12

G.1 Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates 12

G.2 Federal Award Notices 12

SECTION H – POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION 13

H.1 Administrative and National Policy Requirements 13

H.2 Reporting Requirements 14

SECTION A - BASIC INFORMATION

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

Funding Opportunity Title: “Fiscal Year 2026 Notice of Funding Opportunity:
Assistance for Local Emergency Response Training
(ALERT) Grant Program”

Announcement Type: Initial Announcement

Funding Opportunity Number: 693JK326NF0010

Assistance Listing Number: 20.709

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Executive Summary

The ALERT Grant Program was authorized in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 117-58), which codified the ALERT grant program at 49 U.S.C. § 5116(j). Incidents involving the transportation of flammable liquids by rail pose special risks to emergency responders and the public.

The ALERT Grant Program is designed to train local emergency responders to recognize and respond to rail transportation flammable liquid emergencies. ALERT grants are open to nonprofit organizations representing regional public-private partnerships to provide in-person or web-based training on response activities related to the transportation of crude oil, ethanol, and other flammable liquids by rail.

A.1 Funding

This NOFO is subject to the availability of funds. To carry out this grant program, the Administrator may use any amounts recovered during the fiscal year from grants awarded under 49 U.S.C. § 5116 during a prior fiscal year. PHMSA anticipates \$1,000,000 will be made available to support the FY 2026 ALERT Grant Program. The expected amounts of individual Federal awards for organizations range from \$100,000 to \$500,000.

A.2 Period of Performance

The period of performance is a minimum of 12 months from the effective date of the award. An applicant may request a period of performance up to 24 months. Applicants must only apply for

funding that can be reasonably expended within this time frame and for allowable projects that can be completed within the period of performance.

A.3 Type of Award

Discretionary grant award.

Agency Contact Information

Questions related to the content of this funding opportunity should be submitted to the point of contact below or e-mail HMIT.grants@dot.gov.

If an applicant has technical difficulties submitting the application through grants.gov, the applicant should contact grants.gov at 800-518-4726 or e-mail support@grants.gov, as well as contact Carla.Sheppard@dot.gov.

Program Contact

Carla Sheppard

Phone: 202-689-9818

E-mail: Carla.Sheppard@dot.gov

SECTION B - ELIGIBILITY

B.1 Eligible Applicants

The FY 2026 ALERT grant is open to nonprofit organizations representing regional public-private partnerships. The nonprofit organizations must be able to provide direct or web-based training on HAZMAT to individuals with statutory responsibility to respond to accidents and incidents involving HAZMAT. The training will focus on response activities related to the transportation of crude oil, ethanol, and other flammable liquids.

For the purposes of the ALERT Grant Program, an IRS nonprofit is an organization that is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as being tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) or other sections of the Internal Revenue Code. These organizations are typically organized for charitable, religious, educational, scientific, or literary purposes and do not distribute profits to owners or shareholders. They can receive tax-deductible donations, which is a significant benefit of their nonprofit status.

As described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code, nonprofit organizations that are eligible cannot use Federal funds for lobbying activities defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995. "For profit" organizations are not eligible applicants for ALERT grants.

B.2 Cost Sharing or Matching

There are no requirements for cost-sharing or matching.

B.3 Funding Restrictions

The following costs are not eligible for reimbursement under the FY 2026 ALERT Grant Program:

1. Expenses claimed or reimbursed by another program.
2. Expenses counted as matching funds towards another Federal program.
3. Any costs disallowed or stated as ineligible in 2 CFR Part 200.
4. Entertainment, alcohol, or morale costs.
5. Excessive costs for general office supplies, equipment, computer software, printing, and copying.
6. Personnel costs such as overtime, backfill, stipends, and fees for the personnel receiving training.
7. Pre-Award costs are not authorized without PHMSA's prior approval, consistent with 2 CFR § 200.458.

SECTION C – PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

C.1 Statement of Purpose

This funding opportunity is associated with [Assistance Listing 20.709](#). Through this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) solicits competitive applications from eligible organizations for Assistance for Local Emergency Response Training (ALERT) grant funds. Properly planned and maintained training programs are essential to ensure emergency responders who receive training under the grant can protect nearby persons, property, and the environment from the effects of accidents or incidents involving the transportation of hazardous material—in accordance with existing regulations or National Fire Protection standards for competence of responders to accidents and incidents involving hazardous materials (HAZMAT).

PHMSA requires applicants to comply with all applicable Federal financial assistance regulations and maintain an auditable accounting system that includes a detailed accounting and description of each grant expenditure. PHMSA measures performance based on the projects included in the approved financial assistance application and whether those projects fulfilled the needs outlined in the statement of need.

Incidents involving the transportation of flammable liquids by rail pose special risks to emergency responders and the public. The ALERT Grant Program trains local emergency responders to recognize and respond to rail transportation flammable liquid emergencies.

Nonprofit organizations representing regional public-private partnerships provide in-person or web-based training on response activities related to the transportation of crude oil, ethanol, and other flammable liquids by rail.

C.2 Statute and Program Authority

The ALERT Grant Program is authorized under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (Pub. L. 117-58). The ALERT Grant Program is codified at [49 U.S.C. § 5116\(j\)](#).

SECTION D - APPLICATION CONTENTS AND FORMAT

D.1 Address to Request Application Package

PHMSA requires applicants to apply electronically through [grants.gov](#). Applicants must download the application package associated with this funding opportunity.

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

D.2 Content and Form of Application Submission

Applications for the FY 2026 ALERT funding should be submitted in electronic format in grants.gov. The application includes two overall sections: (1) standard forms that the applicant must download and complete from grants.gov under the FY 2026 ALERT funding opportunity; and (2) attachments the applicant will need to create and upload to grants.gov.

Standard Forms

The following forms are found in grants.gov under the FY 2026 ALERT Funding Opportunity and must be completed by the applicant.

1. Standard Form SF-424 – Application for Federal Assistance
2. Standard Form SF-424A – Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs
3. Certification Regarding Lobbying
4. Standard Title VI/Non-Discrimination Assurances

Applicant Attachments

All the following forms must be created by the applicant and uploaded to grants.gov under the FY 2026 ALERT Grant Funding Opportunity. Guidance for completing the project narrative and budget narrative is provided in the proceeding sections.

1. [Project Narrative attachment](#)
2. [Budget Narrative attachment](#)
3. Indirect Cost Agreement or Statement claiming 15 percent de minimis (if applicable)
4. Letters of Support from partner organizations (if applicable)
5. Additional optional attachments (if applicable)

Applications should be well-written and free of mathematical errors in the line-item budget and budget narrative. Project narratives should have the sections clearly identified and follow the structure requested in this NOFO. The application forms and templates are available on grants.gov in the “Related Documents” tab with detailed instructions on the application process. Please also reference Section F to ensure the application addresses the criteria on which PHMSA will evaluate.

Given the complexity of some aspects of the application process, technical assistance is available to help with the application process. Please contact the technical primary point of contact listed in Section I for technical assistance.

Sharing of Application Information – PHMSA may share application information within the Department or with other Federal agencies if the Department determines that sharing is relevant to the respective program’s objectives. [Click here for more information.](#)

SECTION E – SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES

E.1 Submission Dates and Times

Completed applications must be received electronically by 11:59 p.m. EST on June 19, 2026. Do not physically mail any applications. Applications received after this deadline may not be considered. PHMSA will only accept one application per applicant.

Questions Due Date and Time: June 17, 2026 by 11:59 p.m. EST.

NOTE: All questions can be submitted via the Message Center in FedConnect or send questions to the Technical Point of Contact in Section I of this NOFO. PHMSA is not responsible for answering questions that are received after the Questions Due Date and Time.

To begin the process, applicants must be registered with grants.gov to apply. It is highly recommended that applicants begin the registration process as soon as possible to avoid delays with submission. **Failure to comply with the application requirements as described in this section may result in rejection of the application.**

Accessing Grants.gov

1. **Grants.gov.** For new users, go to <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-registration>, or go to the main page at <https://www.grants.gov/> and select “Register.” 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 at 800-518-4726 or e-mail support@grants.gov.
2. **FedConnect.** Applicants are encouraged to register for an account with FedConnect at <https://www.fedconnect.net> before applying. 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, click the following link to review the *FedConnect: Ready, Set, Go! Tutorial*. For other technical issues or questions, either e-mail fcsupport@unisonglobal.com or call 1-800-899-6665 option 2. The FedConnect Support Center is staffed Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m. EST, except Federal holidays.

If an applicant has technical difficulties submitting the application through grants.gov, the applicant should contact grants.gov at 800-518-4726 or e-mail support@grants.gov, as well as contact the Grants Program Office at 202-366-1109 or e-mail HMIT.grants@dot.gov.

E.2 Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM)

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 PHMSA is ready to make an award, PHMSA may determine the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant. PHMSA recommends that applicants review the SAM database at sam.gov to ensure their UEI is updated and “active.”

Each applicant is required to:

- Register in SAM (SAM.gov) before submitting their application.
- Provide a valid UEI in their application.
- Maintain an active SAM registration and UEI with current information when it has an active Federal award or an application under consideration.

SECTION F - APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

F.1 Criteria

When identifying projects, applicants should consider how the project will increase safety. PHMSA will evaluate applications through administrative, technical, and programmatic reviews based on the evaluation criteria.

Merit Criteria

PHMSA developed merit criteria to rate and select competing applications. Within the application, demonstrate the extent to which the activities will impact the safe transport of hazardous materials. 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

- Applicant will submit a plan to provide training. A summary of the planned activities during the period of performance will be filled out by each applicant.
- Does the applicant have the ability to establish a curriculum or have an existing curriculum that complies with regulations and the National Fire Protection Association standards for competence of responders to accidents and incidents involving HAZMAT?
- Is the applicant able to provide a comprehensive needs assessment to identify locations in which volunteer or remote emergency responders are in critical need of HAZMAT training for response activities to the transportation of flammable liquids and other HAZMAT such as gases or other corrosive material by rail?
- Does the applicant have expertise in the development and delivery of an emergency response training curriculum to the transport of flammable liquids or other HAZMAT such as gases or corrosive material by rail?

2. Programmatic Criteria

- Does the applicant provide a detailed needs assessment to identify gaps in training to HAZMAT responders and include macro-level national data with references to quantitative and qualitative information?
- Does the applicant have the capacity to reach a target population of emergency responders and involve them in a training program?

- For each planned course, PHMSA will evaluate the type of course, the number of Expected Courses, the expected number of students to be trained, and the expected locations, if known. Applicants should use the following table format:

Assistance for Local Emergency Response Training (ALERT)		
Planned Output Measures		
Output Measure Category	Planned Course Name	Planned Count of Students
Planned Trainings	Course Title	Expected Count of Students Trained

- Does the applicant include a plan to develop and make available in an electronic format HAZMAT response training to emergency responders specific to the transport of flammable liquids and other HAZMAT such as gases or corrosive material by rail?
- Does the applicant describe the proposed training delivery model and how it will effectively deliver training to the desired recipient(s)?
- Does the application explain any food costs? Are the costs reasonable?
- Do the applicant’s program activities appear to be allowable, allocable, necessary, and reasonable?
- Does the applicant provide a timeline that clearly communicates when project activities will take place?
- Does the application list clear outputs, goals, and objectives that indicate the grant will have a projected impact on reducing risk and enhancing HAZMAT transportation safety?
- How many students will be trained? Is the cost per trained student reasonable?
- Does the applicant outline a monitoring and evaluation strategy to help ensure that the project will be successful?
- Did the applicant provide a completed and properly filled out SF-424 form?
- Did the applicant submit a completed lobbying form and Title VI form?
- Do the budget (SF-424A) and budget narrative align?
- Does the budget narrative provide details as to how the costs under Personnel correspond to the staff included in the narrative and how they were calculated?

- Does the budget narrative provide an explanation or breakout of the staff Fringe Benefits?
- If there are funds under Travel, does the budget narrative provide a clear and reasonable explanation that relates to these costs?
- Does the budget narrative identify supply costs and are the costs adequately explained?
- If there are funds under Contractual, does the budget narrative clearly describe how contractual costs were derived for each agreement or subaward?
- If there are costs under Other, have the costs been reasonably explained?
- If indirect costs are requested, does the application/budget narrative include an approved, current Indirect Cost Rate agreement or statement claiming the 15 percent de minimis rate?

F.2 Review and Selection Process

Please thoroughly read the [Review and Selection Process](#).

The Department intends to apply principles from [DOT Order 2100.7 \(Ensuring Reliance Upon Sound Economic Analysis in DOT's Policies, Programs and Activities\)](#) and [DOT Order 2100.9 \(Ensuring Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity in Department of Transportation Policies, Programs, and Activities\)](#) when evaluating applications and making award selections. To the maximum extent permitted by law, DOT will prioritize projects that are in alignment with the principles outlined in DOT Orders 2100.7 and 2100.9.

The Department seeks to fund projects that advance the priorities of this Administration as described in DOT's mission statement and across executive orders.

Please note that to comply with the requirements of [2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E](#), PHMSA's Agreement Officer and Grant Specialist may request additional information pertaining to your application during the application review and evaluation process.

F.3 Risk Review

Prior to making an award, PHMSA is required to review and consider any information about the responsibility and qualification of the applicant that is accessible through SAM (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System, FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. § 2313). An applicant 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 in this system. PHMSA will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to any other information available in SAM, in making a judgment about the

applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards as part of the risk review required by 2 CFR § 200.206.

SECTION G - AWARD NOTICES

G.1 Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Applicants chosen for funding will receive electronic notification of the Federal award. Upon notification, the applicant's Authorized Representative must sign and return the award within the timeframe prescribed by PHMSA. PHMSA plans to make awards no later than September 30, 2026, with a proposed period of performance start date noted on the award agreement.

G.2 Federal Award Notices

PHMSA's grant awarding official will award grants to responsible and eligible applicants, at its discretion, whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this NOFO. Funds will be administered on a reimbursement basis. 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 DOT'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:

1. The legal name and address of recipient.
2. Title of project.
3. Name(s) of key personnel chosen to direct and control approved activities.
4. Federal Award Identification Number assigned by PHMSA.
5. Period of Performance, specifying the duration of the project.
6. Total amount PHMSA approved for the project.
7. Legal authority under which the award is issued.
8. Assistance Listing Program Number (formerly CFDA).
9. Applicable award terms and conditions.

10. Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the award.
11. Other information or provisions deemed necessary by PHMSA.

SECTION H – POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION

H.1 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:

1. [49 U.S.C. § 5116\(j\)](#) – Planning and training grants, monitoring and review.
2. [2 CFR Part 200](#) – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.
3. [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 ecfr.gov by clicking on Title 49 CFR Part 20.
4. Civil Rights and Title VI – As a condition of a grant award, grant recipients will demonstrate that the recipient has a plan for compliance with civil rights obligations and nondiscrimination laws, including [Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#) and implementing regulations ([49 CFR Part 21](#)) (including any amendments thereto), the [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990](#), and [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act](#), all other civil rights requirements, and accompanying regulations. This should include a current Title VI plan. DOT’s and the applicable Operating Administrations’ Office of Civil Rights may work with awarded grant recipients to ensure full compliance with Federal civil rights requirements. See “Standard Title VI/Non-Discrimination Assurances” for the form by the same name that must be completed and returned by the grant applicant.
5. [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.ecfr.gov/ by clicking on Title 49 CFR Part 32.
6. Compliance with Federal Law and Policies – The applicant assures and certifies, with respect to any application and awarded Project under this NOFO, that it will comply with all applicable Federal laws, regulations, executive orders, policies, guidelines, and requirements as they relate to the application, acceptance, and use of Federal funds.

7. Federal Anti-Discrimination - Except where prohibited by court order, pursuant to Section 3(b)(iv)(A) of Executive Order 14173, Ending Illegal Discrimination And Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity, the Recipient agrees that its compliance in all respects with all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws is material to the government's payment decisions for purposes of section 3729(b)(4) of title 31, United States Code.

Except where prohibited by court order, pursuant to Section 3(b)(iv)(B) of Executive Order 14173, Ending Illegal Discrimination And Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity, by entering into this agreement, the Recipient certifies that it does not operate any programs promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives that violate any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws.

To the extent a court order bars the implementation or enforcement of one or more of the provisions with respect to a particular applicant or recipient, the Department will not implement or enforce the relevant provision(s) against that applicant or recipient for as long as the order remains in place.

H.2 Reporting Requirements

Progress Reports -Each grant recipient is required to submit a progress report to show progression of approved projects and activities. The reports must follow the instructions outlined in the terms and conditions of the grant award. Grant recipients with a period of performance that is longer than 12 months are required to submit annual progress reports. Grant recipients with a performance period of 12 months need only submit a final progress report (refer to section below). Grant recipients must follow the instructions outlined in the terms and conditions of the grant award. The report must include:

1. 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.
2. The challenges the grantee faced, and strategies implemented to mitigate those challenges.
3. An updated timeline of grant activities projected to take place for the remainder of the grant period of performance.
4. As available, impact statements or analysis from instructors, public sector responders, or other stakeholders regarding the impact the current period of performance grant activities have had on protecting people from the risks of HAZMAT transportation.

Federal Financial Reports- Each grant recipient is required to submit Federal Financial Reports (SF-425) to show a cumulative account of expenditures from approved activities.

Grant recipients with a period of performance longer than 12 months must submit annual Federal Financial Reports. Grant recipients with a performance period of 12 months need only submit a final Federal Financial Report (refer to the section below). Grant recipients must follow the instructions outlined in the terms and conditions of the grant award.

Final Reports- Each recipient is required to submit a final Progress Report and final Federal Financial Report (SF-425). Final Federal Financial Reports and Progress Reports must be submitted by e-mail at HMIT.grants@dot.gov.

The reports are due no later than 120 days after the performance period has ended. Final reports must follow the instructions outlined in the terms and conditions of the grant award and must include:

1. A summary of the activities and outputs that took place during the period of performance. See chart below as a template to follow:

Output Measures						
Output Measure Category	Course Name	Count of Students	City	State	Employer Name	Supporting Documentation
Training Delivered	Course Title	# of students trained	City	State	Employer Name	Training rosters, course agendas, city/state logs, contact hour totals, and employer list for trained students

2. Challenges the grantee faced and strategies taken to mitigate such challenges.
3. A completed timeline of the activities that took place during the completed period of performance.
4. 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 from the risks of HAZMAT transportation.

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

Performance and Program Evaluation: Program Evaluation is an assessment using systematic data collection and analysis of one or more programs, policies, and organizations intended to assess their effectiveness and efficiency (5 U.S.C. § 311). Recipients and subrecipients are encouraged to incorporate program evaluation including associated data collection activities

from the outset of their program design and implementation to meaningfully document and measure their progress. Allowable data and evaluation costs are specified in 2 CFR 200.455(c).¹ As a condition of grant award, grant recipients may be required to participate in an evaluation undertaken by DOT or another agency or partner. The evaluation may take different forms such as an implementation assessment across grant recipients, an impact and/or outcomes analysis of all or selected sites within or across grant recipients, or a benefit/cost analysis or assessment of return on investment. DOT may require applicants to collect data elements to aid the evaluation and/or use information available through other reporting. Grant recipients must agree to: (1) make records available to the evaluation contractor or DOT agency staff; (2) facilitate and provide access to program records, and any other relevant documents to calculate costs and benefits; (3) in the case of an impact analysis, facilitate the access to relevant information as requested; and (4) follow evaluation procedures as specified by the evaluation contractor or DOT agency staff.

¹ <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-E/subject-group-ECFRed1f39f9b3d4e72/section-200.455>.