

UNIVERSITY TRANSPORTATION CENTERS PROGRAM

2017 GRANT SOLICITATION For Regional Centers in Federal Regions 1, 2, 3

Eligibility to apply under this solicitation is limited only to a consortium of two or more eligible non-profit institutions of higher education located in one or more of the states within one of the following Standard Federal Regions:

- **Region 1:** Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont;
- **Region 2:** New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands; or
- **Region 3:** Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Opening Date: June 12, 2017
Application Due: August 18, 2017

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology
U.S. Department of Transportation
Washington, D.C. 20590-0001

<http://utc.dot.gov/>

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SECTION A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A.1 Introduction

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act; P. L. 114-94, December 4, 2015) authorizes the Secretary of Transportation to make grants to eligible non-profit institutions of higher education¹ to establish and operate University Transportation Centers (UTCs or Centers). Non-profit institutions of higher education may include qualifying two-year institutions (20 U.S.C. § 1001(a))². The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology (OST-R) of the U.S. Department of Transportation (US DOT) will manage the UTC Program (**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number--20.701**).

Through this solicitation, the US DOT seeks competitive grant applications for Regional UTCs, one each in Standard Federal Regions 1, 2, and 3, with an initial annual award of \$2,570,600 each. A detailed description of the Regional UTCs is provided in Section B: Award Information. Previously, the Department solicited competitive grant applications for these three regions; however the Department did not select any of the submitted applications. UTCs will be selected by the Secretary, in consultation with the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology, the Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration and other modal administrators as appropriate (49 U.S.C. § 5505(b)(4)(B) as amended by P.L. 114-94, Sec. 6016).

In this competition, applicants shall address the following selected research priorities taken from section 6503, Subtitle III of title 49 as amended by P.L. 114-94, Sec. 6016:

- A. Improving mobility of people and goods;**
- B. Reducing congestion;**
- C. Promoting safety;**
- D. Improving the durability and extending the life of transportation infrastructure;
and,**
- E. Preserving the existing transportation system.**

A Regional UTC must be located in the United States or its territories. It must be a consortium of two or more universities. Each Center is required to obtain matching funds from non-Federal sources. Regional UTCs must obtain matching funds in an amount at least equal to the US DOT grant amount. The US DOT grant funds may be expended through September 30, 2023, and

1 The *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Grants*, Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 200 defines "institution of higher education" as that term is established in 20 U.S.C. § 1001(a).

2 Qualifying two-year institutions may include junior or community colleges if they meet the requirements of 20 U.S.C. § 1001(a).

Centers will have until that date to meet the full match requirement.

Specific instructions on how to apply for Regional UTC grant funding under this solicitation are provided in Section D: Application and Submission Information.

A.2 UTC Mission and Objectives

The purpose of all Centers is to:

- Advance transportation expertise and technology in the many disciplines that comprise transportation through research, education and workforce development, and technology transfer;
- Provide a critical transportation knowledge base outside the US DOT; and
- Address vital workforce needs and educate the next generation of transportation leaders.

In addition, the UTC Program and each individual Center share the following objectives:

- **Research:** To conduct basic, advanced, and applied research, the products of which are judged by peers or other experts in the field of transportation to advance the body of knowledge in transportation.
- **Education and Workforce Development:** To provide an education program relating to transportation that includes multidisciplinary course work, participation in research, and workforce development activities and programs to expand the workforce of transportation professionals.
- **Technology Transfer:** To deliver an ongoing program of technology transfer that makes transportation research results available to potential users in a form that can be implemented, utilized, commercialized, or otherwise applied.

Although every Center has the same broad objectives, the US DOT encourages diversity in the program participants and in the approaches individual Centers take to achieve the program objectives. The US DOT encourages unique approaches to research, education, workforce development and technology transfer, building on or reflecting institutional expertise, facilities, and partnerships. Finally, in order to achieve its vision of a truly multimodal integrated system, the US DOT encourages UTCs to engage in research, education and workforce development, and technology transfer activities that cut across disciplines and span multiple modes of transportation, enabling improvements to the Nation's surface transportation system, inclusive of rail, maritime, highway, pipelines, transit, and any links to aviation. Centers may (but need not) choose to specialize in any one of these modes of transportation.

A.3 UTC Program History

The FAST Act's authorization of the UTC Program both sustains existing and establishes new and vital initiatives in research, education and workforce development, and technology transfer that have benefited the U.S. traveling public and its transportation system over the years.

The US DOT initiated the UTC Program in 1988, as authorized in the Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987. After a nationwide competition, the US DOT awarded grants to create a UTC in each of the ten Standard Federal Regions with the primary purpose of conducting research.

Since that time the UTC program has been re-authorized by each subsequent surface transportation authorization bill.

The latest renewal of the UTC program occurs in the FAST Act, enacted in December 2015, establishing the UTC Program as five National UTCs, ten Regional UTCs, and up to 20 Tier 1 UTCs. A competition held earlier in 2016 selected all but three Regional UTCs located in Regions 1, 2, and 3. This competition is held solely for the purpose of selecting Regional UTCs in Regions 1, 2, and 3.

Additional information on the UTC Program is available on the [UTC Program website](http://utc.dot.gov/) (<http://utc.dot.gov/>).

A.4 Relationship to Other US DOT Efforts

The US DOT continues to build on existing efforts to apply research awards and resources in an effective manner, in order to ensure a fast, safe, efficient, accessible, and convenient transportation system that meets vital national interests and enhances the quality of life of the American people, both today and into the future.

SECTION B: AWARD INFORMATION

The US DOT will continue to operate the UTC Program based on the principles of full and open competition. Awards will be in the form of grants to successful applicants. The funding and authorization available to OST-R for this solicitation at this time are solely from Federal Fiscal Year 2016 funds.

The FAST Act authorizes \$72.5 million for Federal Fiscal Year 2016 (FY 2016), \$75 million each for Fiscal Years 2017 (FY 2017) and 2018 (FY 2018), and \$77.5 million each for Fiscal Years 2019 (FY 2019) and 2020 (FY 2020) for up to 35 competitive grants for UTCs. The FY 2016 through FY 2020 funds are subject to appropriations and to an annual obligation limitation. The amount of budget authority available in a given year may be less than the amount authorized for that fiscal year. Funds made available under this solicitation may be expended from an anticipated start date of November 30, 2017 through September 30, 2023.

Current UTC Program grant recipients located in Regions 1, 2, or 3 are eligible to apply for grant funding. If current UTC Program grant recipients are selected to be new UTCs under this solicitation, the new grant will be managed as a separate entity from any previous grant(s).

B.1 Number of Awards

One Regional Center in each of the following Standard Federal Regions will be selected under this solicitation:

- Region 1,
- Region 2, and
- Region 3.

The actual fiscal year funding amount for the first year and the authorized future fiscal year funding amounts for each Regional Center are as follows:

- \$2,570,600 each for FY16.
- up to \$2,850,000 each for each of FY17 and FY18, and
- up to \$2,950,000 each for each of FY19 and FY20.

B.2 Regional Centers

A Regional Center must focus its efforts on one of the national transportation issues as identified by the selected FAST Act research priority areas: Improving Mobility of People and Goods; Reducing Congestion; Promoting Safety; Improving the Durability and Extending the Life of Transportation Infrastructure; and Preserving the Existing Transportation System.

Section D: Application and Submission Information provides additional information on non-exclusive candidate topic areas categorized under each FAST Act research priority area.

The three Regional Centers to be selected through this competition are to be located in the three standard Federal Regions listed in Table 1 below, one per region. They must address regional needs, and each Regional Center, including any consortium members, must be located within the Federal region to be served. Each Regional Center must serve as a focal point within its respective region to help coordinate UTC transportation research and education programs with regional needs and initiatives. At a minimum, a Regional Center should work with the other UTCs in its region to maximize the effectiveness of the region's collective services and programs.

Table 1. Standard Federal Regions Being Competed

Standard Federal Regions	
Region 1	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont
Region 2	New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands

Region 3	Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia
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SECTION C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

C.1 Eligible Applicants

Only U.S. non-profit institutions of higher education as defined under 20 U.S.C. § 1001(a) and located in Regions 1, 2, or 3 are eligible to apply. Non-profit institutions of higher education may include qualifying two-year institutions that meet the requirements of 20 U.S.C. § 1001(a). Applications submitted by or including an entity other than a U.S. non-profit institution of higher education will not be considered for selection.

As noted in Section B: Award Information, current UTC Program grant recipients are eligible to apply for grant funding. If current UTC Program grant recipients are selected to be new UTCs under this solicitation, the new grant will be managed as a separate entity from any previous grant(s).

Under the FAST Act, a UTC must be a consortium of two or more non-profit institutions of higher education led by one lead institution, all located in one of the Standard Federal Regions 1, 2, or 3 of the United States or its territories. Typically, a consortium is a meaningful arrangement with all members involved in planning the overall direction of the Center's activities and participating in most aspects of the Center; the consortium is a long-term relationship intended to last the full life of the grant. Any application submitted by a sole non-profit institution of higher education and that is not part of a consortium will not be considered for selection.

Universities may collaborate with state DOTs, the private sector, and non-profit organizations; however, organizations that are not defined as U.S. non-profit institutions of higher education will not be considered members of the consortium. Organizations that are not members of a consortium may collaborate with a Center on a particular project or provide a service that assists in accomplishing that Center's activities.

The grantee institution will be the direct and primary recipient of the US DOT funds, and must perform a substantive role in carrying out Center activities, and not serve solely or primarily as a conduit for awards to another party. Under this solicitation there is no minimum requirement for concentration of funding at the grantee institution.

C.2 Cost Sharing or Matching Funds

Total funding for a Center's operation must include the US DOT funding plus non-Federal matching funds. The matching funds may include Federal funds provided to a recipient under 23 U.S.C. § 504(b) or 505 (local technical assistance and state planning and research programs managed by the Federal Highway Administration). No other sources of Federal funds may be

counted toward the match requirement.

The non-Federal matching funds may be cash or in-kind, must be used to accomplish program objectives and the purpose of the grant, and must be fully documented in the Center's records. Grantees will have the length of the grant period to provide the full amount of required matching funds.

Regional UTCs must obtain matching funds in an amount at least equal to the US DOT grant amount.

Letters of commitment for matching funds are neither required nor permitted in the application.

SECTION D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

D.1 Address to Request Application Package

Applicants may view this grant solicitation and other supporting materials on Grants.gov (the Federal electronic grant identification and application system) and the [UTC Program website](http://UTCProgramwebsite), <http://utc.dot.gov>.

For Grants.gov, applicants should log onto <http://www.grants.gov> and cite Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number 20.701 or **Opportunity No.**

UTCLIMITEDREGIONCOMP2017 in order to search for this funding opportunity.

This grant solicitation and proposed grant terms and conditions (including reporting requirements) may also be found on the [UTC Program website](http://UTCProgramwebsite), <http://utc.dot.gov>.

D.2 Content and Form of Application Submission

D.2.1 Applications

You must be located within Standard Federal Regions 1, 2, or 3 in order to be eligible to apply for a UTC grant under this solicitation. If you are eligible to receive an award under this solicitation, your (non-profit institution of higher education's) authorized representative must submit the application through Grants.gov. You will want to ensure well in advance that your institution is registered with Grants.gov, as registration is not instantaneous. Eligible entities must have or must secure a DUNS number for the purposes of formal application. The DUNS number is a unique nine-character number that identifies your organization. Each applicant's DUNS number will be maintained as part of the applicant's profile. This number can be obtained free-of-charge through the Dun and Bradstreet website (<http://www.dnb.com/get-a-duns-number.html>).

Your UTC application must be submitted to Grants.gov no later

than **11:59 PM EDT, FRIDAY, August 18, 2017**. [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) will provide you with an acknowledgement of your submission.

Hard copies of the application (see Section D.6: Other Submission Requirements) must be received by OST-R no later than **5:00 PM EDT, TUESDAY, August 22, 2017** (*note that this is later than the Grants.gov deadline*).

You are responsible for the accuracy and validity of all the administrative, fiscal, and technical information in your application. The application must consist of:

A proposal that includes:

1. A cover sheet;
2. A one-page research abstract;
3. A written response to the evaluation criteria, and descriptions of the proposed Center Director and key staff (this portion of the proposal must not exceed 35 pages);
4. Required appendices;
5. Standard Forms SF-424 “Application for Federal Assistance” and SF-424B “Assurances – Non-Construction Programs;” and
6. A copy of each of your consortium institutions’ most recent negotiated overhead and fringe benefit rates.

D.2.1.1 Cover Sheet

The cover sheet of the proposal must include the following information:

1. The name of the proposed UTC, and names and locations (city, state, and zip code) of the lead/grantee institution and the other members of the Center’s consortium. In order for OST-R to comply with Federal agency reporting requirements, state whether any of the participating non-profit institutions of higher education is a Minority Serving Institution. **For purposes of this competition, the FAST Act defines a Minority Serving Institution per Section 365 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. § 1067k): an institution of higher education whose enrollment of a single minority or a combination of minorities exceeds 50 percent of the total enrollment.**
2. The Standard Federal Region in which you are located, as shown on Table 1 previously in this document.
3. The FAST Act research priority area that is your primary focus: Improving Mobility of People and Goods; Reducing Congestion; Promoting Safety; Improving the Durability and Extending the Life of Transportation Infrastructure; or Preserving the Existing Transportation System. While your planned activities may span more than one priority area, you must select one priority area as your key focus.

Prepare the cover sheet as an 8.5x11 standard-size page using Arial 12 font with one-inch margins. Color may be used if desired. The cover sheet does not count toward the 35-page limit that applies to the Written Response section that follows.

D.2.1.2 Research Abstract

The research abstract must not be more than one page in length. It should contain high-level descriptions of the following:

- The research topics on which the proposed Regional UTC intends to focus;
- The motives for pursuing the research;
- How the topics align with the chosen FAST Act research priority area and the non-exclusive candidate topic areas that fall within the selected priority area; and
- The impacts that the proposed research is expected to have on the transportation system and its users.

Prepare the research abstract as an 8.5x11 standard-size page using Arial 12 font with one-inch margins. The research abstract does not count toward the Written Response's 35-page limit.

D.2.1.3 Written Response

Page Limits:

This section of your proposal must not exceed a total length of thirty-five (35) 8.5x11 standard-size pages, single-spaced, Arial 12 font*, with one-inch margins. **Any application that exceeds the page limit or that uses other than the specified spacing, font, or margins will be rejected.** Color may be used if desired.

A table of contents is not required; if you choose to include one, it will count toward the 35-page limit.

The cover sheet, abstract, and appendices do not count toward the 35-page limit.

There are specific page limits for the required appendices, which are stated in Section D.2.2.4 below.

Format:

*Arial 12 should be used throughout the document, except for headers/footers only, within which the font size may be no smaller than 9. Arial Black is acceptable, but Arial Narrow is not. Any size/type of font may be used in the appendices.

NOTE: Any hyperlinks to external websites that provide supplemental content to the information contained in the proposal will **not** be viewed by the review panels.

This section must address the following:

1. Response to Evaluation Criteria
2. Center Director and Key Personnel.

D.2.1.3.1 Response to Evaluation Criteria

The proposal submitted in response to this solicitation will serve as the Strategic Plan for any Center that is selected to receive funding. All the items listed below must be addressed clearly and completely.

You must discuss throughout your proposal how your Center will address regional issues. The discussion must include the following:

- How your Regional Center will serve as a focal point within your region to help coordinate UTC transportation research, education, workforce development, and technology transfer programs with regional partners and initiatives.
- How your Regional Center will work with the other UTCs in the region to maximize the effectiveness of their collective services and programs.
- Your institution's relevant experience, if any, in leading regional efforts.
- Your ideas for how the Center can use regional efforts to further UTC program objectives.

All applicants must respond to the following evaluation criteria, in the order specified below.

D.2.1.3.1.A Research Activities and Capability

In this section, describe the key research activities that you will undertake and that demonstrate your capability and experience to carry out these activities and achieve the objectives of the UTC Program. You must provide sufficient detail in this proposal to enable the reviewers to understand what you intend to accomplish with your Center, to see how you plan to select and carry out the projects financed with your grant, and to evaluate the feasibility of your proposed approach as well as your capability to achieve the proposed outcomes within the designated grant time frame.

i. Proposed Research Activities

The FAST Act specifies research priorities that UTCs selected through this competition must address--Improving Mobility of People and Goods; Reducing Congestion; Promoting Safety; Improving the Durability and Extending the Life of Transportation Infrastructure; and Preserving the Existing Transportation System.

In addition, the Act charges the Secretary of Transportation with establishing non-exclusive topic areas within these priorities. These are listed below:

1. Improving mobility of people and goods:

- Increase access to opportunities that promote equity in connecting regions and communities, including urban and rural communities;
- Smart cities;
- Innovations to improve multi-modal connections, system integration, and security;
- Assistive technologies for those with physical or cognitive disabilities;
- Data modeling and analytical tools to optimize passenger and freight movements;
- Innovations in multi-modal planning and modeling for high-growth regions;
- Novel (non-traditional or alternative) modes of transport and shared use of infrastructure; and
- Regional planning and setting of transportation priorities.

2. Reducing congestion:

- Optimize the efficiency and reliability of travel for all transportation system users;
- Improve operations, controls and devices;
- Urban logistics – last mile for both passengers and freight
 - Land use and transportation planning
 - Novel (non-traditional or alternative) forms of freight movement;
- Data Modeling and analytical tools to evaluate effects of shifting transit incentive structure; and
- Ridesharing and alternative forms of transportation.

3. Promoting safety:

- Vehicle and system automation across surface modes;
- Energy and hazardous material transport;
- Safety planning for all users
 - Pedestrians and bicyclists
 - Vehicular users
 - Integrated systems planning;
- Application of transportation safety data and safety management systems;
- Human factors and risk factor analysis;

- Transportation worker safety
 - Construction zones
 - Emergency responders; and
 - Trespass and vandalism.

4. Improving the durability and extending the life of transportation infrastructure:

- Application of new materials and technologies;
- Cyber and communications security;
- Condition monitoring, remote sensing and use of GPS;
- Asset management and performance management
 - Data accessibility and security
 - Analytical tools;
- Construction methodologies and management; and
- Corrosion and aging infrastructure.

5. Preserving the existing transportation system:

- Innovation in aligning transportation decision-making, funding sources and mechanisms;
 - Data modeling and analytical tools to evaluate effects of tolling and investment;
 - System response to disruptive events/resilience to disasters;
 - Infrastructure preservation techniques and cost effective maintenance practices;
 - Retrofits and multiple uses of infrastructure to create efficiencies and reduce barriers to opportunity;
 - Workforce development and capacity building; and
 - Modal shifts.
- Describe your Center's proposed research topic(s) and corresponding relationship to one of the selected FAST Act research priority areas (Improving Mobility of People and Goods; Reducing Congestion; Promoting Safety; Improving the Durability and Extending the Life of Transportation Infrastructure; or Preserving the Existing Transportation System) that you previously identified as your primary focus area. You are encouraged to select from the list of non-exclusive research topic area(s) to provide more depth to your research focus.

The US DOT welcomes a focused Center that will make dramatic impacts on one or a few closely related topics and is not necessarily looking for Centers trying to demonstrate the ability to span a large number of research topics.

- Discuss the degree to which your proposed research activities are multimodal (either across modes or involving modes other than highway) and multidisciplinary in scope, and how such an emphasis impacts the quality of the research. Although the US DOT seeks to fund an array of UTCs that together cut across disciplines and span multiple modes of surface transportation, one or more individual Centers with an especially strong single-

mode focus may be included in that group.

- Describe your commitment to, and implementation of, peer review principles and other research “best practices” in the selection and management of your research projects.
- Provide two to three relevant performance metrics that you will use to assess your performance in meeting research goals.
 - In addition, state how you will obtain and maintain the information included in those metrics.

ii. Capability and Experience

- Describe the research resources already available to conduct research, including those at consortium universities. Among others, these resources may include the following, if relevant to the transportation research to be conducted:
 - Dedicated laboratory space;
 - Specialized computer or other technical equipment; and
 - University support personnel with particular knowledge of transportation-research needs such as a librarian, IT/data specialist, or machinist.
- Describe any research resources you anticipate obtaining in order to perform your proposed research activities.
- Provide details on whether your proposed research activities are a continuation of existing research projects and programs within your university and among members of the consortium, or are intended to provide opportunities to create and establish new research projects and programs.
- Describe your ability to address the specific topic areas you described above as proposed research activities. Please include:
 - Examples of significant impacts of past research on the transportation enterprise, including a description of products or patents, or a change in practice, or instances of informing policy decisions.
 - Examples of research included in peer-reviewed journals, publications, and conferences.
 - Qualifications of faculty expected to be involved in your proposed research activities.

D.2.1.3.1.B Leadership

In this section, you must describe your plans for providing and creating leadership to solve immediate and long range national and/or regional transportation problems and advancing transportation expertise and technology. You should provide examples of:

- Your high standing within the national and international arenas of transportation research as evidenced by activities such as publications, committee work, participation in professional transportation organizations and conferences (e.g., presentations, steering committees, session chairs, etc.), awards, and other indicators of leadership excellence.
- Your experience in contributing to the solution of regional and/or national transportation

problems.

- Your plans for the development of future leaders (young faculty and graduate students).
- Demonstrated leadership in the development and delivery of programs. This includes innovative transportation education, workforce development, technology transfer, and research activities.
- Two to three relevant performance metrics that you will use to measure your Center's leadership, and how you will obtain the information to track these outcomes.

D.2.1.3.1.C Education and Workforce Development

Education and workforce development efforts should result in the development of a transportation workforce that is prepared to design, deploy, operate, and maintain the complex transportation systems of the future. In describing your Center's planned education and workforce development activities, you must provide the following information:

- Describe any accredited degree-granting programs with transportation components and/or specializations that will be part of this grant, and provide the number of degrees conferred annually during the past five years (undergraduate, masters, and Ph.D.) as well as the number of full-time faculty in each program. Describe how the grant will be used to support, increase and improve these academic programs. Discuss what you propose to do to facilitate the connections between your students and transportation industry employers.
- Describe any transportation non-degree programs that will be supported by the grant. Include in your description a narrative on how the grant will support, increase or improve non-degree transportation education programs.
- Describe the number and types of seminars, workshops and/or training courses you will offer with support from the grant and the target audience(s) for those seminars, workshops and/or training courses. Include in your description a narrative on how the grant will support, increase or improve these offerings.
- Describe the outreach and educational activities you propose to undertake with support from the grant to attract new entrants into the transportation field. Discuss any specific plans to reach out to primary and secondary school students and connect your activities with the career technical education system in your state or geographic proximity. Discuss any activities to foster and sustain the interest of primary and/or secondary students in transportation careers beyond the initial exposure. Include in your narrative the target groups by age, grade, ethnicity/race, and/or gender characteristics. Provide details on the annual numbers of students to be involved in the proposed programs, what will be done to promote outreach and educational efforts, and how successes will be documented and shared.
- Describe additional education and workforce development programs and activities that are not listed above. Be sure to include in the narrative a description of program purpose, target audience(s), and numbers of events and participants.
- Provide two to three relevant performance metrics that you will use to measure the

effectiveness of degree granting programs, other educational efforts, outreach, workforce development, and other educational and workforce activities, and describe how you will obtain the information to populate these metrics.

D.2.1.3.1.D Technology Transfer

UTC programs must include an ongoing program of technology transfer to make research results available to potential users in a form that can be implemented, utilized, commercialized or otherwise applied. In this section, you must describe the technology transfer activities you will undertake to ensure the successful transfer of information and technology to those who can use it, especially current transportation practitioners. You must also provide examples of your prior experience in outreach, dissemination, and technology transfer related to transportation research and education:

- Describe your planned activities and prior experience in technology transfer activities, such as:
 - Partnerships across sectors, with private enterprise, non-profit entities, or state and local governments, to move research into practice;
 - Technical assistance to others who might take leadership in applying research results;
 - Use of technology transfer mechanisms, such as licensing, patents, commercialization (provide examples), cooperative research and/or user agreements, or the creation of new business entities;
 - Use of peer reviewed journals or academic publications to showcase research results;
 - Information exchanges, including new or social media campaigns and activities; and
 - Academic and continuing education programs targeted towards transportation professionals, such as statewide or region-wide continuing education courses and/or distance learning, seminars, webinars, and workshops related to transportation.
- Provide two to three relevant performance metrics that you will use to measure the effectiveness of outreach efforts, as well as the progress in implementing research results. Include information on how you will obtain the information to track these outcomes.

D.2.1.3.1.E Collaboration

Centers are expected to form collaborative relationships with other academic and/or research institutions in order to achieve their objectives. Centers must also demonstrate a commitment and capability to form substantial and effective partnerships with public, private and non-profit entities, in order to advance transportation expertise and technology and address critical workforce needs.

In this section, you should describe:

- Your plans for:
 - Collaborating with other universities or research institutions. For your consortium, describe how the participating universities will draw upon diverse types and/or sizes

- of institutions, including Minority Serving Institutions; how the members will work together within the proposed consortium, including roles and responsibilities of lead and other organizations; what each university brings to the proposed consortium; and how the presence of multiple parties will enhance your ability to reach your goals.
- o Establishing collaborative relationships and linking your research, education, workforce development, and technology transfer activities among collaborative partners.
 - o Developing collaborations with other entities, including private sector concerns, Minority Serving Institutions, state DOTs, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, other public sector organizations at all levels of government, non-profit institutions, and technical and practitioner organizations such as the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), and the Transportation Research Board (TRB).
 - The composition of any existing or planned advisory committees.
 - Your prior experience forming collaborative relationships, including the outcomes of these relationships.
 - Two to three relevant performance metrics that you will use to measure the effectiveness of collaborative efforts, and how you will obtain the information to track these outcomes.

D.2.1.3.1.F Program Efficacy

In this section, you must describe your management approach and procedures, and how you will implement planned activities and produce results in an effective and cost efficient manner. This must include the following:

- A description of the availability of institutional resources to carry out planned activities, including the institutional resources available from all members of your consortium. Institutional resources encompass such things as research and training facilities, human resources, physical facilities, and institutional support capabilities. Discuss the collective resources of your consortium that will be available to your Center.

NOTE: If there is any pre-existing center of transportation studies or research at the institution(s) comprising your Center, describe how the UTC's activities and accomplishments will relate to, and be distinguishable from, those of the existing center(s).

- Plans for overall management and oversight of fiscal and technical activities, including methods for ensuring cost efficiency, demonstrating the ability to implement the program in a cost efficient manner.
- Procedures for tracking and coordinating research efforts.

D.2.1.3.1.G Diversity

Applications must demonstrate a Center's commitment to broadening participation and attracting new entrants to the transportation field in order to enhance diversity. Diversity is the inclusion of people of different genders, races, and cultures. Applications should describe planned outreach or workforce development activities designed to increase interest in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) disciplines and/or raise awareness of transportation careers among underrepresented groups including women and minorities.

D.2.1.3.2 Center Director and Key Personnel

In this section, name the individual who will lead the UTC as Center Director, and the key staff members who will support the Center Director in accomplishing the goals of the grant. For purposes of management and oversight, OST-R requires that a single Center Director be identified and affiliated with the grantee institution, and not any of the sub-grant consortium-member institutions.

The Center Director is the person responsible for ensuring compliance with all UTC Program requirements. This role is particularly important in multiparty consortia involving distant partners. The Center Director is expected to represent the Center and/or the UTC Program at external meetings, and is required to participate in up to two annual meetings convened by US DOT with the directors of all UTCs. No minimum percentage of the Center Director's time is required on the grant, but meaningful personal involvement by the Center Director in the UTC is expected.

- Describe how your Center Director plans to effectively direct and oversee the Center's funds, personnel, and programs.
- State the titles and describe the duties and responsibilities of any other key personnel that are considered to be critical for Center activities.
- Briefly discuss the qualifications of the Center Director and key personnel. (**NOTE:** The curriculum vita (CV) for the Center Director is required. CVs for key personnel may be included in the application materials. See further instructions in Section D.2.2.4 below.)

D.2.1.4 Required Appendices

The following appendices are required:

1. Curriculum Vitae for Center Director and Key Personnel
2. Center Budget Plan

The required appendices do not count toward the 35-page limit.

D.2.1.4.1 Curriculum Vitae for Center Director and Key Personnel

Curriculum vitae are limited to two pages per individual. Include only those individuals noted previously in Section D.2.1.3.2 of your proposal. Do not include Personally Identifiable Information (PII) such as Social Security numbers, birth dates, or home addresses.

D.2.1.4.2 Center Budget Plan

Provide a completed overall Center Budget Plan for the first year of the grant, including required matching funds (see Appendix A) for your UTC. Your budget should reflect the \$2,570,600 amount for the Regional UTC) and should cover the initial year of the grant (11/30/2017 to 11/30/2018). Centers will be asked to prepare budgets for subsequent years' funding at the time OST-R is prepared to award those additional funds.

In addition to the overall Center Budget Plan, provide individual budget plans for each consortium member and the lead institution. Amounts shown for each budget category in these individual budget plans must roll up to the amount shown for that budget category on the overall Center Budget Plan.

You may provide the budget plan in any format you choose, but it must use only the budget categories specified in Appendix A.

UTCs selected to receive grants under this solicitation may, subject to availability of funds and the grantee's compliance with grant terms and conditions, receive four additional increments of funding toward the grant at approximately yearly intervals from date of the first award. As with the first increment, grantees will have through September 30, 2023 to expend the additional funds. Prior to awarding such additional funds, OST-R will ask grantees to submit a revised budget reflecting the additional increment of funding.

D.2.1.5 Standard Forms SF-424 and SF-424B

Prepare and submit Standard Forms SF-424 and SF-424B.

D.2.1.6 Confirmation of Negotiated Overhead and Fringe Benefit Rates

As a separate document from the proposal, provide a legible copy of your institution's most recent negotiated overhead rates and fringe benefits rates, including the name and telephone number of the Federal audit agency representative. Obtain and provide the same evidence from each of the consortium institutions.

D.3 System for Award Management (SAM)

Each applicant is required to:

- Be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM, <http://www.sam.gov>) before submitting your application; and
- Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which you have an active Federal award or application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

Applicants which have Federal contracts, grants, and cooperative agreement awards with a cumulative total value greater than \$10,000,000 must provide information to SAM about certain civil, criminal, and administrative proceedings that reached final disposition within the most recent five-year period, that were connected with the award or performance of a Federal award.

D.4 Application Submission Dates and Times

Your UTC application must be submitted to Grants.gov no later than **11:59 PM EDT, FRIDAY, August 18, 2017**. Grants.gov will provide you with an acknowledgement of your submission.

Hard copies of the application must be received by OST-R no later than **5:00 PM EDT, TUESDAY, August 22, 2017** (note that this is later than the Grants.gov deadline). Please refer to Section D.6 (Other Submission Requirements) for details on hard copy submittals.

Your application will be considered complete as initially received by us; if you need to make changes after submission but before the due date, you will need to withdraw and resubmit your application in whole. Any materials submitted after the due date will not be incorporated into the review process unless OST-R specifically requests such material to complete the review of your application.

D.5 Funding Restrictions

The grant funds intended for award under this solicitation do not apply to, and may not be used for, construction activities or projects.

Please visit the [UTC Program website](http://utc.dot.gov) (available at <http://utc.dot.gov>) to view *General Provisions of Grants for University Transportation Centers (November 2016)* and *Deliverables and Reporting Requirements for University Transportation Centers (November 2016)*, which provide information on proposed grant terms and conditions regarding certain cost items, and the post-award requirements and deliverables pertaining to the grant.

D.6 Other Submission Requirements

In addition to submitting your application electronically through Grants.gov, you must also submit to the UTC Program office hard copies of the following documents:

- Two copies of the proposal with all of its appendices;
- One copy each of Standard Forms SF-424 and SF-424B; and

- One copy of the negotiated overhead and fringe benefits rates for all members of the consortium.

These hard copies must contain identical information to what you submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.Grants.gov) except that original signatures are not required on the hard copies of the SF424 and SF424B. Any type of binding is acceptable. The hard copies must be received by OST-R no later than **5:00 PM EDT on TUESDAY, August 22, 2017** (*note that this is later than the Grants.gov deadline*). OST-R recommends that you use an overnight delivery or courier service that allows you to track and document delivery and receipt. An application will not be rejected if the hard copies are not received by the deadline, but failure to meet the deadline will be noted by reviewers as part of their assessment of your application.

Please address your hard copy submittal as follows, using all of the information shown:

Amy Stearns
US DOT/OST-R/mail code RDT-30
Work Station E33-472
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590-0001

Contact telephone number regarding hard copy submittal only: (202) 366-4957.

Personally Identifiable Information such as Social Security numbers, birth dates, or home addresses *must not* be included in the application. Information submitted as part of the application may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

SECTION E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

E.1 Criteria

Under this solicitation, the Secretary will select the applicants to be awarded grants in Regions 1, 2, and 3. The selections made by the Secretary are final.

The US DOT seeks to select a balanced portfolio across all selected Centers that supports the FAST Act research priority areas, includes different types and/or sizes of universities, provides geographic diversity, and is multimodal in focus.

E.2 Review and Selection Process

E.2.1 Compliance Review

After the closing date, OST-R staff will conduct an initial review of applications to identify any that are incomplete, non-responsive to this solicitation, or ineligible to receive a UTC grant. Any

such applications will be rejected and the proposers notified.

E.2.2 Merit Review

OST-R will utilize knowledgeable and experienced subject matter experts drawn from the transportation research community and the US DOT to evaluate all complete and responsive applications. Submitted proposals will be sorted according to the FAST Act research priority areas. The proposals will be provided to a review panel consisting of the appropriate subject matter experts.

Reviewers will base their evaluations of the Regional Centers on the criteria identified in Section D.2.1.3.1 of this solicitation. The review panels will rate each proposal as highly recommended, recommended, or not recommended for funding. In accordance with the US DOT's best-practice guidance for grant competitions, numerical values such as differing weights for various selections or criteria are not being used in this competition; applications will be evaluated as a whole.

The reviewers' recommendations will be forwarded to a committee comprised of the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology, the Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration, and other US DOT modal administrators as appropriate. This committee will recommend recipients for all available UTC grants, taking into consideration the statutory restrictions on receiving grants. The final decisions as to grant recipients will be made by the Secretary of Transportation.

OST-R reserves the right to request from any or all applicants such additional information as it may deem necessary to complete its review of applications. In conformance with the transparency requirements of the FAST Act, applicants may (upon request) receive copies of any materials used in the evaluation of their proposals after the conclusion of this competition.

E.2.3 Risk Assessment

Federal awarding agencies must report information to the [Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System \(FAPIIS, <http://www.fapiis.gov>\)](http://www.fapiis.gov) about agreements with a non-Federal entity that involved material failure to comply with the award terms and conditions, suspension or debarment proceedings, or similar integrity or prior-performance issues. A non-Federal entity may submit comments in the record in [FAPIIS](http://www.fapiis.gov) about any information that Federal awarding agencies had reported to the system about that non-Federal entity, for consideration by the Federal awarding agency in making future Federal awards to the non-Federal entity.

Prior to making an award to a non-Federal entity, Federal agencies must determine whether that non-Federal entity is qualified to receive that particular award. In making a determination about any potential risk posed by an applicant being considered for a UTC grant, the UTC Program will review and take into consideration any information about the applicant that is in the [System](http://www.fapiis.gov)

for Award Management (SAM) and the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS).

SECTION F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

F.1 Federal Award Notices

The funding and authorization available to OST-R for this solicitation at this time are solely from Federal Fiscal Year 2016 funds. OST-R expects to award four additional increments of funding following the date of the initial award, subject to availability of funds and the grantee's compliance with terms of the grant. OST-R will allow all funds awarded to be spent over an approximately five-year period, from the anticipated November 30, 2017, award date until September 30, 2023.

Under no circumstances may a public announcement of grant funding or awards (such as a press release) serve as an authorization to begin performance. The receipt of written documentation of a grant award bearing the signature of the Assistant Secretary of Research and Technology shall provide sole authorization to begin performance.

F.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Data Management Plans (DMPs)

All grants to UTCs will be administered in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200, 49 U.S.C. § 5505, and other applicable Federal laws. General provisions that will apply to UTC grants to be awarded in 2016 can be found at <http://utc.dot.gov>.

In accordance with the US DOT Departmental Data Release Policy ((DOT Order 1351.34, adopted March 28, 2011; available at <https://www.transportation.gov/digitalstrategy/policyarchive/Departmental-Data-Release-Policy>), each UTC awardee is required to create a **Data Management Plan (DMP)**. In the DMP, a UTC awardee must propose program-level strategies to deposit Digital Data Sets resulting from DOT-funded scientific research in a repository that enables and allows for public access and sharing. The DMP will be reviewed and must be approved by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology.

Upon the receipt of written confirmation of a grant award, each awardee will be given a date by which it must develop a DMP and submit it to OST-R. Failure by the awardee to submit a DMP to OST-R will result in the withholding of UTC grant funds.

Additional information on DMP requirements may be found in *General Provisions of Grants for University Transportation Centers (November 2016)* available at <http://utc.dot.gov>. Specific instructions on the development of DMPs may be found in *Deliverables and Reporting*

Requirements for University Transportation Centers (November 2016) available at <http://utc.dot.gov>.

For additional grant terms and conditions, please refer to *General Provisions of Grants for University Transportation Centers (November 2016)* available at <http://utc.dot.gov>. This document and *Deliverables and Reporting Requirements for University Transportation Centers (November 2016)* will become part of the grant agreement when awarded.

F.3 Reporting

For grant deliverables and reporting requirements, please refer to *Deliverables and Reporting Requirements for University Transportation Centers (November 2016)* available at <http://utc.dot.gov>. This document will become part of the grant agreement when awarded. Applicants should integrate these deliverables and reports into their management plans and schedules.

SECTION G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT

Until **4:00 PM EDT on TUESDAY, August 15, 2017**, questions about this solicitation or the UTC Program in general may be directed to the following email address: UTCgrants@dot.gov. Questions posed by applicants will be posted along with OST-R's responses on the [UTC Program website](http://utc.dot.gov) (available at <http://utc.dot.gov>), in order that all potential applicants may benefit equally from any additional information provided in the responses.

NOTE: Until a formal notice of award is issued, no communication by the government, either written or oral, shall be interpreted as a promise that an award will be made.

SECTION H. OTHER INFORMATION

Under the FAST Act, the UTC Program is authorized through Federal Fiscal Year 2020. Funds made available under this solicitation may be expended up to September 30, 2023.

The funding and authorization available to OST-R for this solicitation at this time are solely from Federal Fiscal Year 2016 funds. Aside from the current competition referenced in this solicitation, no information is available at this time about the possibility of, or timeline for, future UTC Program competitions.

APPENDIX A

Center Budget Plan
11/30/2017 – 11/30/2018

CATEGORY	Budgeted Amount from Federal Share	Budgeted Amount from Matching Funds	Explanatory Notes
Center Director Salary			
Faculty Salaries			
Administrative Staff Salaries			
Other Staff Salaries			
Student Salaries			
Staff Benefits			
Total Salaries and Benefits			
Student Tuition			
Permanent Equipment ¹			
Expendable Property, Supplies, and Services ²			
Domestic Travel			
Foreign Travel ³			
Other Direct Costs (specify) ⁴			
Total Direct Costs			
F&A (Indirect) Costs			
TOTAL COSTS	\$2,570,600		

1 Permanent Equipment includes any item of equipment having a unit acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more. Per the grant's *General Provisions* document, written permission must be obtained from OST-R prior to the purchase of such equipment.

2 Expendable Property, Supplies, and Services include such tangible items as office and laboratory supplies and such intangible services as telecommunications.

3 Foreign Travel includes travel to or from any destination outside of the United States and its territories. Per the grant's *General Provisions* document, written permission must be obtained from OST-R prior to the initiation of such travel, or such travel may not be funded under the grant.

4 Itemize other anticipated direct costs not mentioned above.