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Operations and Safety Bureau  
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Agency of Transportation

<http://vtrans.vermont.gov/>

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April 15, 2020

RE: FFY2021 Highway Safety RFP Administrator's Letter

To All Highway Safety Advocates,

The Agency of Transportation (VTrans) is pleased to offer the following Requests for Proposals (RFP) for Federal Fiscal Year 2021 (FFY 2021). This RFP is presented in the same format as last year and the process for submission of responses also remains the same. Our goal remains to have agreements executed prior to the beginning of the grant performance period.

The State Highway Safety Office (SHSO) is conscientious of the fact that your agency may need extra time to complete their Grant Electronic Application and Reporting System (GEARS) application. We realize that your agency and staff may have competing priorities due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The SHSO has set a two-week application period in GEARS for applications to be accepted. The SHSO will review extensions to the application deadline on a case-by-case basis. Please notify our office as soon as possible if you think there will be a delay in your organization's application. While we may be able to offer brief application extensions, the SHSO has a goal of a July 1<sup>st</sup> Highway Safety Plan (HSP) submission.

At this time the SHSO staff are all operating from their respective homes; current subrecipients you should not notice any disruption in grant services from SHSO staff. We do not anticipate any delays in the scoring of proposals or submitting recommendations for the funding projects in the HSP.

We do want to inform Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) and highway safety partners of changes to the National Highway Traffic Safety Communications Calendar for FFY2021, this is important information to note as you build your budget request:

- 1). The Statewide Coordinated Distracted Driving Mobilization Effort - **Connect 2 Disconnect (C2D)** - which was originally supposed to occur in April 2020 has been moved to October 2020. In addition, there will be another C2D Distracted Driving Mobilization Effort in April of 2021. Our Law Enforcement Liaisons (LELs) will reach out to you regarding those specific enforcement campaign dates.
- 2). The Statewide Coordinated Seat Belt Mobilization Effort - **Click It or Ticket (CIOT)** Campaign – which was originally supposed to occur in May 2020 has been moved to November 2020. In addition, there will be another CIOT Seat Belt Mobilization Effort in May of 2021. The LELs will reach out to you regarding those specific enforcement campaign dates.

3). The SHSO introduced the Distracted Driving Enforcement grants in the Spring of 2020. If your agency received a grant, remember you must reapply to receive Distracted Driving Enforcement funds again in FFY2021. If your LEA did not receive funds in FFY2020, you may still apply for a FFY2021 grant.

4). Law Enforcement Support equipment – please do **not** apply for equipment grant funding at this time, only OP/DUI Enforcement grant recipients will be eligible to apply for FFY2021 equipment funds during the amendment period which typically begins in late January. The SHSO will send out a notice when that amendment period opens, and your request may be sent at that time.

Recognizing that there are limited grant funds available it is important for our grantees to understand that VTrans will continue to only award new grant funds received from NHTSA and that this is a competitive process. Although the SHSO has emphasized for years its commitment to a data-driven approach to solving highway safety issues, that commitment remains elevated at a higher level this Federal Fiscal Year. What that means to grantees is this: some agencies may receive more funding than what they have received in the past based on a demonstrated need, while some may receive less funding than in the past (or even no funding) as a result of the data demonstrating a reduced problem or no recognizable problem.

Lastly, as we re-dedicate our resources to making our roadways safer, the staff at VTrans looks forward to working with all our partners as we strive toward achieving our common goal of "zero deaths."

As always, if you have any questions relating to this RFP or any other highway safety related questions please contact the SHSO staff.

Sincerely,

*Allison Laflamme*

Allison Laflamme, Administrator  
State Highway Safety Office  
Operations and Safety Bureau

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**FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2021  
NHSTA GRANT PROPOSAL GUIDE**

**Vermont Agency of Transportation**

**Philip B. Scott**

GOVERNOR

**Joe Flynn**

Secretary of the Agency of Transportation

# Request for Proposals FFY2021

## **INTRODUCTION:**

The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans), by and through its Secretary, Joe Flynn, is pleased to announce this request for proposals for National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) program funding grants. NHTSA provides grants to fund local, county, state and not-for-profit entities for projects to improve highway safety, reduce deaths and serious injuries due to crashes. Grants are used to mitigate traffic safety program deficiencies, expand on-going activities, and/or develop new programs related to highway safety.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND AUTHORITY:**

In accordance with authorities listed below VTrans is requesting project proposals to support the targets and strategies of its highway safety program to reduce the number of motor vehicle crashes and related injuries and fatalities in Vermont. These targets and strategies form the basis for the Federal Fiscal Year 2021 (FFY 2021) Vermont Highway Safety Plan (HSP), which is submitted to NHTSA for approval and funding. The highway safety programs' goals and objectives are defined and approved each year in the HSP and align with the State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). Each year VTrans makes this request for Vermont HSP projects.

VTrans awards these federal highway safety grant funds to improve highway safety and reduce deaths and serious injuries due to crashes.

The FFY 2021 project period is October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021.

The procedures outlined in this manual are based upon the requirements of the Highway Safety Act of 1966 (United States Code, Title 23, Chapter 4, §§ 402, 405b, 405c, 405d, 405e, 405f, 405h, 1906 and subsequent amendments; Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act; Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21); Vermont Statutes Annotated; and Administrative Orders issued by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), VTrans, Vermont Department of Finance and Management, and the Vermont State Highway Safety Office (SHSO).

NHTSA funds grant projects under the Highway Safety Act. Federal funds are authorized under the Act to assist state and political subdivisions in conducting highway safety programs approved by the respective governor and the U. S. Secretary of Transportation.

VTrans prepared this guide to provide guidance in conformance with the authorities listed above and all federal fiscal and technical requirements. All governmental and non-profit agencies are encouraged to take an active part in Vermont's Highway Safety Program. Please contact the SHSO when you need information or assistance.

If any proposal submitted by an agency is then funded by another source, the submitting agency must notify SHSO in writing immediately. Failure to make this notification may result in supplanting, which is a direct violation of Federal rules, or may adversely affect future funding opportunities. See 2 CFR 200.444

## Federal Award Information—Required

The estimated total funding for projects will be:

- 402 Education Projects – \$527,000**
- 402 Occupant Protection Education - \$150,000**
- 402PT Speed/Aggressive Driving/Crash Recon Projects - \$140,000**
- 402 Occupant Protection Enforcement Projects - \$847,000**
- 405B Occupant Protection Education Projects - \$100,000**
- 405C Traffic Records Coordinating Committee Projects –\$227,550**
- 405D Impaired Driving Education, Enforcement, DRE and Support Projects - \$1,013,700**
- 405E Comprehensive Distracted Driving Enforcement - \$900,000**
- 405E Comprehensive Distracted Driving (Flexed – Prosecution Support) - \$150,000**
- 164AL Driving Under the Influence (DUI) Enforcement and Prosecution Support- \$900,000**
- 405F Motorcycle Safety Projects - \$12,000**
- 1906 Racial Profiling Prohibition Data Collection- \$150,000**

This is the only announcement for NHTSA grants for the performance period beginning October 1, 2020 and ending September 30, 2021.

Applications must be submitted by your Authorizing Official in GEARS no later than 2:00 P.M. on Wednesday, April 29, 2020.

Award amounts will vary depending on the number and quality of applications.

Applicants must cite the highway safety data that justifies the need for an award.

An agreement will be provided to agencies that are selected for award.

NHTSA Funding is made available under Section 402 State and Community Highway Safety Funding; Sections 405B, 405C, 405D, 405E, and 405F National Priority Safety Programs; Section 164AL Minimum Penalties for Repeat Offenders for DWI; 1906 Grant Programs to Prohibit Racial Profiling and State Traffic Safety Information System Improvements Grant.

**CFDAs:** 20.600; 20.616; 20.601; 20.608; 20.610; 20.611 Eligible Applicants—Required. We are soliciting grant proposals from state agencies, non- profit organizations, local and municipal police agencies, county sheriff departments (CSD), schools, colleges and universities, hospitals and other interested organizations within Vermont.

## Regional Enforcement Strategies

Applications for new regional enforcement strategies are not being sought for FFY2021. The only regional applications that will be entertained are those in the existing regional coverage

areas.

## **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:**

All political subdivisions participating in federal grant processes must comply with the Single Audit Act of 1984 (P.L. 98-502). Mail a copy of the most recent independent audit of your agency to:

Vermont Agency of  
Transportation  
Audit Division  
219 North Main Street -  
Barre City Place  
Barre, VT 05641

Highway Safety Act funds cannot be used for the construction, design, or maintenance of highways or for highway construction research projects.

Highway Safety Act funds may be used for conducting inventories, need studies, engineering studies, systems development, program implementation, or for purchasing equipment. (Program implementation can include putting new programs into use and the training required for their use)

## **Buy America Act**

In accordance with the Buy America Act (49 U.S.C. 5323(j)):

Only steel, iron and manufactured products produced in the United States may be purchased with Federal funds unless the Secretary of Transportation determines that such domestic purchases would be inconsistent with the public interest, that such materials are not reasonably available and of a satisfactory quality, or that inclusion of domestic materials will increase the cost of the overall project contract by more than 25 percent. Clear justification for the purchase of non-domestic items must be in the form of a waiver request submitted to and approved by the Secretary of Transportation.

Effective July 30, 2015, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) published a Buy America Act public interest waiver. The waiver allows States to purchase any manufactured product with a purchase price of \$5,000.00 or less, excluding a motor vehicle when the purchased product is using Federal grant funds administered under Chapter 4 of Title 23 of the United States Code. (Reference Federal Register Vol. 80, No. 125, published June 30, 2015.)

## **Data Universal Numbering System**

DUNS is Dun & Bradstreet's (D&B) "Data Universal Numbering System". It is a copyrighted, proprietary means of identifying business entities on a location-specific basis. A DUNS number is a unique nine-character identification number Dun & Bradstreet provides free of charge. <https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/>

## **System for Award Management (SAM)**

The System for Award Management (SAM) is the Official U.S. Government system that consolidates the Central Contractor Registration (CCR), Federal Contract Registry (FedReg), Online Representations and Certifications Application (ORCA), and Excluded Parties List System (EPLS). Business entities that have obtained a DUNS number must register annually on SAM to be eligible to receive financial assistance. There is NO charge to register or maintain your entity registration record in SAM. <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/>

## **FUNDING CRITERIA GUIDELINES:**

Federal funds allocated to finance state and local government highway safety projects are intended to supplement, not be a substitute for, ongoing state or local program expenditures. Projects should be designed to eliminate a deficiency in an applicant agency's program or to expand an existing program. Agencies that are tax-based and non-profit agencies may apply to SHSO for federal grant funds.

Federal grants are funded in the form of reimbursable contract expenditures. SHSO reimburses funds on the basis of a written claim made by the applicant agency each time funds are expended.

## **GENERAL PROPOSAL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:**

### **How to Apply**

<https://egrants.vermont.gov/Login2.aspx?APPTHEME=VTACCD>

## **FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2021:**

SHSO grant funding is based on the Federal fiscal year calendar which begins on October 1, 2020 and ends on September 30, 2021. Grants for FFY 2021 are awarded for a one-year period.

If selected, SHSO staff will assist your agency in finalizing the contractual grant agreement. Development of the grant agreement will begin at SHSO in June 2020; however, **grants are not considered approved until fully executed by the Secretary of VTrans**. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the grantee to be prepared to initiate the grant activities by the October 1, 2020 start date.

Upon written notification from SHSO that your proposed grant agreement has been selected, it is imperative that your agency Project Administrator research the procurement processes for obtaining grant funded items (equipment bids, etc.) in order to complete the project in a timely manner. However, **do not incur any costs prior to the contract execution**.

If you have any questions when preparing your proposal, please contact your Program Coordinator at SHSO for assistance.

## **PROPOSAL REVIEW:**

Proposals will be reviewed by SHSO staff to determine:

- Whether the crash and activity data covering the three preceding years indicates a significant problem;
- Past performance of the applicant (performance in submitting statistics and fiscal compliance, past grant awards, etc.);
- Whether the proposed goals and objectives address the problem; and
- Whether the applicant intends to continue the program following the termination of federal funding support.

## **SHSO Funded Program Descriptions:**

### **Important Contract Exclusions:**

#### **Unallowable Costs**

In addition to the unallowable costs outlined in the applicable Federal Cost Principles, State Regulations and Local Government rules, there are some costs that must be authorized in advance or are prohibited.

- **Advertising**-Only for special circumstances can federal funds be used to purchase television and radio time for highway safety public service messages. Such expenditures must be approved in advance. Projects to purchase television and radio time (or any other type of media) are not being accepted through this RFP.
- **Supplanting**- Federal funds cannot supplant (replace or serve as a substitute for) funds from any other sources. Definition: The use of Federal funds to support personnel or an activity already supported by local or state funds. Supplanting is prohibited.
- **Office Furnishings**-Grant funds cannot be used to purchase office furnishings.
- **Out-of-State Travel** - Out-of-state travel requires prior written approval.
- **Equipment over \$5,000.00**- Equipment with a unit acquisition cost of \$5,000.00 or greater is prohibited without prior written approval from VTrans.
- **Gratuities**- Tips and/or gratuities are unallowable.
- **Lobbying**- Federal grant funds cannot be used for lobbying activities.
- **Promotional Items**- T-shirts, uniforms, polo shirts, caps, etc. cannot be purchased with NHTSA funds.
- **Alcoholic Beverages**- Funds cannot be used to purchase alcoholic beverages.

**Entertainment costs** including amusement, social activities and any costs directly associated with such costs (such as tickets to shows or sports events, meals, lodging, rentals, transportation, and gratuities) are not allowable.



## **Proposals in the following areas are being requested:**

### **Education Projects –**

The Safe Communities Educational Programs provide a necessary link between NHTSA programs and local communities. Vermont's demographics and local diversity, as well as distance between locations make it difficult to administer a centralized program. The programs have defined tasks, such as participation in NHTSA national safety campaigns. The projects are required to provide and manage education and outreach activities that address all the Critical Emphasis Areas (CEAs) based on local data and need as established and included in the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). Projects must address critical safety needs incorporating an analysis of crash data as the principle basis for programs. Data analysis and problem identification are the foundation for each project and will determine the structure and accuracy of the goals, activities, measures, and evaluation efforts for the duration of the project. Analysis might include, but are not limited to, years of crash, injury, and fatality data; license, registration, and conviction data; and other data from various sources. Data included in agreements will identify safety problems and support the subsequent development of targets and countermeasures. Of interest are programs that are designed to modify behaviors and attitudes that focus on drivers, passengers and vulnerable users to include: pedestrians, bicyclists and motorcyclists.

### **Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (TRCC) Projects –**

Vermont continues to work diligently to improve upon efficient and accurate traffic records systems. The Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (TRCC) is tasked with making improvements to timeliness, accuracy, completeness, and accessibility of the traffic records data to improve and enhance the six traffic records systems: Crash, roadway, vehicle, driver, citation/adjudication, and injury surveillance. The TRCC provides guidance in developing, prioritizing and supporting the traffic records strategic plan developed to implement recommendations noted during Vermont's 2016 Traffic Records assessment.

The Vermont TRCC engages in programs to:

- Demonstrate quantifiable, measurable improvements in the accuracy, completeness, timeliness, uniformity, accessibility and integration of data into the highway safety database.
- Improve the core data gathering capabilities of the highway safety database and enhance the highway safety data gathering capabilities.
- Identify and rank high crash locations, crash causation and roadway characteristics.
- Identify safety corridors with data-driven support for infrastructure safety improvements.
- Address recommendations noted in the 2016 Traffic Records Assessment to improve data in the traffic records systems for timeliness, completeness, accuracy, accessibility, uniformity and integration.
- Identify a minimum set of motor vehicle crash data elements and their attributes that Vermont should consider collecting and including in its State crash data

systems.

## **Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) Projects –**

Vermont's Drug Evaluation and Classification Program, also referred to as the Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) program was established in 2005 and provides statewide coverage. The DRE program will actively recruit and selectively choose DRE candidates. Vermont has hosted several in-state DRE Schools since 2011 and this practice will continue, with all classes being open to candidates from other states. Vermont has implemented the Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) training and is currently hosting several courses per year. It is now a requirement of the Vermont Police Academy that graduates of the VPA must receive ARIDE training within three years of graduation. The legalization of marijuana presents many new and yet to be identified issues for policy makers and law enforcement.

Only qualified law enforcement agencies with certified DREs are eligible for funding.

## **Impaired Driving Programs –**

Impaired Driving programs reduce traffic safety problems that result from individuals driving motor vehicles on a public highway while under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or both. The terms "driving while intoxicated" and "driving under the influence" mean driving or being in actual physical control of a motor vehicle on a public highway while having an alcohol concentration above the per se limit established by each State, when under the influence of alcohol, or when the person is under the influence of any other drug or under the combined influence of alcohol and any other drug.

Impaired driving remains a major contributing factor in many of the state's fatal crashes. With many small law enforcement agencies (LEAs) in Vermont, there are limited resources to pay for law enforcement activity and the equipment necessary to assist officers engaged in impaired driving enforcement. Approximately 80% of the state's LEAs employ fewer than 24 full-time officers, and low staffing levels frequently impact an agency's ability to participate in High Visibility Enforcement (HVE) mobilizations and ongoing sustained enforcement. This project supports LEAs with the opportunity to increase enforcement on the roadways, and to upgrade equipment that is used in HVE campaigns and ongoing sustained enforcement.

Participating LEAs must agree to work cooperatively with nearby agencies to conduct sobriety checkpoints during national mobilizations such as the Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over campaign. These participating LEAs are also encouraged to team up with neighboring agencies to work multi-agency saturation patrols. In addition, LEAs use their grant funds for ongoing DUI enforcement and directed patrols within their respective areas of responsibility. Lastly, there are regional DUI Task Force teams, modeled after the Click It or Ticket task force, that utilize teams of selected officers working together to target geographic areas across the state. These officers are recruited from LEAs throughout the state and must demonstrate proficiency in all phases of DUI enforcement. These target areas are identified using crash and DUI arrest data provided by the State Highway Safety Office.

This increased enforcement model is especially useful during holiday periods and other special days that historically have seen increased rates of impaired driving crashes, such as St Patrick's Day, Super Bowl Sunday, and other local high-profile community events.

LEAs that have demonstrated active participation in national and state-initiated impaired driving enforcement campaigns, are afforded the opportunity to apply for traffic safety equipment items that are

directly related to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of their DUI enforcement activities. This equipment includes but is not limited to; portable breath testing equipment and related supplies, checkpoint lighting and sign packages, traffic cones/flares, reflective traffic vests, and high visibility rechargeable flashlights.

## **Occupant Protection Enforcement/Support Equipment Projects –**

- carry out a program to support high-visibility enforcement mobilizations, including paid media that emphasizes publicity for the program, and law enforcement;
- carry out a program to train occupant protection safety professionals, police officers, fire and emergency medical personnel, educators, and parents concerning all aspects of the use of child restraints and occupant protection;
- carry out a program to educate the public concerning the proper use and installation of child restraints, including related equipment and information systems;
- carry out a program to provide community child passenger safety services, including programs about proper seating positions for children and how to reduce the improper use of child restraints;
- purchase and distribute child restraints to low-income families, provided that not more than 5 percent of the funds received in a fiscal year are used for such purpose; and
- establish and maintain information systems containing data concerning occupant protection, including the collection and administration of child passenger safety and occupant protection surveys.

## **1906 Racial Profiling Data Collection-**

Pursuant to Title 20 V.S.A. §§ 2366 et seq, all Vermont law enforcement agencies are required to collect traffic stop data. However, this statute does not require an analysis of that gathered information. This grant is focused on evaluating the results of the collected data and to provide technical assistance to all LEAs to improve the data collection process by standardizing the data fields as well as the format of the report. The awardee(s) will work in partnership with the Department of Public Safety and SEARCH to evaluate options for convenient and efficient methods for automated submissions through the Vermont Justice Information Sharing System (VJISS) and into the analytical Data System (ADS) for extracting the data in an analyzable format.

## **GRANT PROPOSAL TRAINING INFORMATION:**

Federal Fiscal Year 2021 grant requests must be made via the Grant Electronic Application and Reporting System (GEARS).

## Questions or Comments

If your Agency has questions or comments on the submittal process or the application itself, please contact the SHSO Email address below and a staff person will get back to you:

Law Enforcement Applications: [AOT.GHSPGrantsLE@vermont.gov](mailto:AOT.GHSPGrantsLE@vermont.gov)

Education Applications: [AOT.GHSPGrantsEDU@vermont.gov](mailto:AOT.GHSPGrantsEDU@vermont.gov)

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