FY2016 Mobility on Demand (MOD) Sandbox Demonstration Program

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Notice of Funding Opportunity: here

OVERVIEW

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is releasing $8 million from FY2014 and FY2016 research funds for a new program to demonstrate innovative uses of “mobility on demand” (MOD) technologies. FTA will fund projects that develop new business models to provide quality, seamless, equitable mobility.

FTA envisions the “MOD Sandbox” as a way to test innovative and emerging technologies and business practices that integrate MOD with existing transit service.

Applications are due by 11:59 PM EDT on July 5, 2016 through grants.gov

Eligible Applicants

Public transit agencies, states, local governments, and federally recognized Indian tribes are eligible to apply if they provide public transportation. Applicants must include and identify at least one of the following as a strategic project partner:

- Private for-profit and not-for-profit organization, including shared use mobility provider, or technology system suppliers;
- Operator of transportation services, such as employee shuttle services, airport connector services, university transportation systems, or parking and tolling authorities;
- State or local government entity;
- Other organization that may contribute to the success of the project team including consultants, research consortia or not-for-profit industry organizations, and institutions of higher education.

FTA may identify any partner as critical and condition funding on that partner’s participation.

Eligible Projects

FTA seeks “bold and innovative ideas” for using new technologies and emerging practices to improve mobility.

All projects that lead to the demonstration of MOD and transit integration are eligible. Projects must adhere to the principles of this program: System Integration; Partnership Driven; Innovative Business Model; and Equity of Service Delivery.

FTA suggests several possible projects that applicants could pursue, including:

Transportation for America (T4America) is an alliance of elected, business and civic leaders from communities across the country, united to ensure that states and the federal government step up to invest in smart, homegrown, locally-driven transportation solutions — because these are the investments that hold the key to our future economic prosperity.
• First/last mile connectivity;
• Off-peak service;
• Human service transportation;
• Shared-use, on-demand service;
• Employee, neighborhood, or campus shuttles;
• Internet of Things/Smart City applications;
• Open data; or
• Connected or autonomous vehicles.

Program Goals

FTA’s mobility on demand program aims to improve transportation efficiency by promoting agile, multimodal service; integrate transit as a vital component of regional transportation networks; and improve customer experience.

Through this Sandbox Demonstration program specifically, FTA seeks to:

• Improve the transit industry’s readiness for MOD;
• Assist the transit industry in integrating with MOD;
• Test, validate, and document the viability of MOD integration with transit;
• Measure the impacts of MOD for transit riders and overall in the transportation system; and
• Examine the regulations and requirements that may support or impede MOD.

Project selection criteria

FTA will evaluate applications on the following criteria, based on the information provided in the application.

• Impact and outcomes, including the extent to which the project advances the goals of the MOD program;
• Quality of the project approach and business model, including existing partnerships and strategies to engage the public;
• Capacity and commitment of the project team, including qualifications, experience, and documented dedication to the project;
• Advancement of equity and accessibility for all; and
• Support for data collection and evaluation.

A technical review committee will consider all applications on the criteria above. The FTA administrator will make a final selection based on the technical merits, and may also consider geographic diversity, diversity of project types, and other funds awarded.

Cost-share

Federal funding can cover a maximum of 80 percent of the project cost. Applications must document the cash or in-kind local matching contribution.
Application Outline

Applications must include:

- SF424 (Application for Federal Assistance);
- Applicant and Proposal Profile supplement, including:
  - Discussion of the goals of the project;
  - Current state of MOD in the community or service area;
  - Current challenge providing robust, flexible service and how the project will address that need;
  - Proposed project scope, including all services the project will include;
  - Description of the project partners, their roles and anticipated contributions;
  - Description of the approach or business model that will be demonstrated;
  - The expected outcomes and benefits from the project;
  - The extent to which the project is replicable or nationally significant;
  - How the project addresses equitable and accessible transportation, including riders with low-incomes or disabilities;
  - Any federal, state, or local policy waivers the applicant will seek to implement the project;
  - The types of data that will be collected and how the applicant will make the data available to FTA;
  - Project timeline;
  - Project budget; and
  - Sources of funding.

Award of Funds

FTA seeks projects that can be fully implemented within 12 months of the grant award and can be tested for a minimum of 12 months.

Recognizing that the available funds may be insufficient to fund all worthwhile projects, FTA may consider providing select applicants with sandbox program flexibility without awarding them program funds.

Access to Project Data

Projects should include a data collection component. FTA requires access to the project data for use in evaluating the demonstrated systems. Information that is confidential or a trade secret must be indicated and FTA will protect it to extent possible.