



Illinois Department of Transportation

Office of Highways Project Implementation / Bureau of Local Roads & Streets
2300 South Dirksen Parkway / Room 205 / Springfield, Illinois / 62764

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CIRCULAR LETTER 2023-12

Cathy Johnson
COUNTY CLERK
VERMILION CO. IL.

**SAFE STREETS AND ROADS FOR ALL (SS4A) DISCRETIONARY GRANT PROGRAM
NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO) FOR FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2023
(FFY2023)**

COUNTY ENGINEERS / SUPERINTENDENTS OF HIGHWAYS MUNICIPAL ENGINEERS
/ DIRECTORS OF PUBLIC WORKS / MAYORS / METROPOLITAN PLANNING
ORGANIZATIONS / TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY COMMISSIONERS / CONSULTING
ENGINEERS

PURPOSE & INTRODUCTION:

On March 31st, 2023, the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced through the Federal Register soliciting project applications for the second round of funding opportunity identified as the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program. This Program was authorized and established under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL).

The USDOT announced that the SS4A Program is a \$1 Billion Program for FFY 2023 plus an additional \$177,213,000 from FFY 2022 applied as carryover; for a total of \$1,177,213,000 which is targeted to assist with ensuring safe streets and roads for all, and to address the national roadway safety crisis. This new and dedicated program is made available to support regional, local, and Tribal initiatives with plans, projects and strategies that will prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries.

The SS4A Program will be awarded on a competitive basis to support planning, infrastructure, behavioral, and operational initiatives to prevent death and serious injury on roads and streets involving all roadway users, including: pedestrians (pedestrians is inclusive of all users of the pedestrian infrastructure, including persons with disabilities); bicyclists; public transportation, personal conveyance, and micro-mobility users; motorists; and commercial vehicle operators.

The funding and program supports the USDOT's National Roadway Safety Strategy and collaborative efforts to advance the Safe System Approach, and address safety by implementing redundant measures that lead to multiple types and layers of protection.

DIRECT RECIPIENT PROGRAM:

The SS4A program is a direct grant recipient program. IDOT is not permitted to serve as a pass-through, and the recipient has the responsibility for ensuring completion of the grant activities and for compliance with the terms of the grant award and federal requirements. All awards will be administered pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards found in 2 CFR § 200 as adopted by the Department at 2 CFR § 1201.

PROGRAM INFORMATION:

Applicants are strongly encouraged to read through the NOFO to ensure all applications guidelines are followed at NOFO SS4A. The following summary is provided herewith only as an overview:

SAFE STREETS AND ROADS FOR ALL (SS4A) GRANT PROGRAM:

<p>Summary:</p>	<p>To support local initiatives to prevent transportation-related deaths and serious injuries, and improve overall roadway safety, through safety action plan development and implementation actions. The focal points of this Program include pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, motorists, personal conveyance and micro-mobility users, and commercial vehicle operators. The Program seeks to provide funding to develop the tools to help strengthen a community’s approach to roadway safety and safe lives, on roads and streets while working towards the initiatives of “Vision Zero” or “Towards Zero Deaths”.</p>
<p>Eligible Entities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Governmental Agencies (or political subdivision of the State of Illinois) • Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) • Federally recognized Tribal government • Multijurisdictional group of entities described in the aforementioned 3 (three) types of entities
<p>Eligible Projects:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Planning and Demonstration Grants</u>; such as the development of action plan, completion or supplementation activities of a comprehensive safety action plan; <p>OR (BUT NOT BOTH);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Implementation Grants</u>; such as the planning, design, and development activities for infrastructure projects and other strategies identified in a comprehensive safety action plan.
<p>Expected Range of Awards: (Size and Quantity)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Planning and Demonstration Grants (hundreds of grants nationwide):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$100k to \$10M for all applicants • <u>Implementation Grants (up to 100 grants nationwide):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$2,500,000 to \$25,000,000
<p>Key Provisions:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires the consideration, among other factors, the likelihood of a project significantly reducing or eliminating fatalities and serious injuries involving various road users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, motorists, and commercial vehicle operators. • Cost Sharing or Matching – grants may not exceed 80% of the total eligible activity costs.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emphasis placed on multiple jurisdictions or regionally significant applications
FY 2023 Funding:	\$177,213,000 for FFY 2023 (nationally)

CHANGES IN SS4A PROGRAM FOR FFY 2023:

Please note that the FY2023 NOFO incorporated lessons learned from the FY2022, and the differences are summarized in the Section 1A of the NOFO and via the following link: [What's new in 2023?](#) Following is a brief and abbreviated summary of the changes, and each applicant must review the NOFO in detail for a complete understanding:

General:

- The NOFO will be posted on Grants.gov, but the application process will now be through Valid Eval. This will provide a clearer and more standardized structure for the application materials
 - Planning and Demonstration Application Link:
https://usg.valideval.com/teams/usdot_ss4a_2023_planning_demo/signup
 - Implementation Application Link:
https://usg.valideval.com/teams/usdot_ss4a_2023_implementation/signup
- “Planning and Demonstration” grants replaced “Action Plan” grants from FFY 2022 to better reflect eligible activities that applicants can include in their applications
- Updated the definition of an underserved community to be consistent with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and DOT definitions of a disadvantaged community designation
- DOT expects 2 (two) announcements for grant recipients:
 - October 2023 for an initial set of Planning and Demonstration Grant awards
 - December 2023 for Implementation Grants and any remaining Planning and Demonstration Grants

Planning and Demonstration Grants:

- Clarified eligible activities, with a new focus area on “demonstration activities”
- Applicants are encouraged to include supplemental planning and demonstration activities along with their application to create or revise an existing Comprehensive Safety Action Plan
- Flexibility for a longer grant period of performance under certain circumstances
- Applicants seeking funding for supplemental planning and demonstration activities no longer are required to have a completed Comprehensive Safety Action Plan prior to submitting an application if they are applying for both creating or revising a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan **and** supplemental planning and demonstration activities
 - Applicant must be in process of completing a conforming Comprehensive Safety Action Plan to apply for **only** supplemental planning or demonstration activities
- Revised selection criteria for the “Additional Safety Considerations” narrative, which is now expected to be 1-2 pages

Implementation Grants:

- A new selection criterion “Supplemental Planning and Demonstration Activities” was added for Implementation Grant applications that include supplemental planning and demonstration activities
- Implementation Grant applicants are encouraged to include supplemental planning and demonstration projects into their applications
- USDOT expects to make partial awards for just supplemental planning and demonstration activities in instances where Implementation Grant applicants were unsuccessful in receiving a full award
- The list of additional considerations for award selection was expanded. It now includes:
 - Project readiness (included in FFY 2022)
 - Percentage of funds to underserved communities (included in FFY 2022)
 - Projects located in rural areas (new in FFY 2023)
 - Selections that support diversity amongst the award recipients (new in FFY 2023)
 - Federal funding requests under \$10 million (new in FFY 2023)

INFORMATION WEBINARS:

The USDOT will convene a series of stakeholder “How To Apply” webinars to help potential applicants learn about the SS4a Grant Program, and what they need to know in preparing an application. The dates, times, topics and registration links are as follows (or via the webinar series homepage [Webinar Series: Safe Streets and Roads for All Grants | US Department of Transportation](#)):

1. **Action Plan**
 - This webinar will offer a general overview of the SS4A program and the grant application process.
 - Wednesday, April 26, 1:00-2:30 p.m. (EDT)
 - [Register to attend April 26 webinar](#)
2. **Supplemental Planning and Demonstration**
 - This webinar will offer a general overview of the SS4A program and the grant application process and provide a particular focus on applying for funding for supplemental Planning and Demonstration activities.
 - Thursday, April 27, 1:00-3:00 p.m. (EDT)
 - [Register to attend April 27 webinar](#)
3. **Implementation Grants**
 - This webinar will offer a general overview of the SS4A program and the grant application process and provide a particular focus on applying for Implementation Grants.
 - Tuesday May 2, 1:30-3:00 p.m. (EDT)
 - [Register to attend May 2 webinar](#)

DEADLINES & WHERE TO SUBMIT APPLICATIONS:

Applicants must submit their applications via "Valid Eval", an online submission proposal system used by USDOT at the following addresses:

For Implementation Grant Applications

For Planning and Demonstration Grant Applications

Applications from eligible entities must be submitted by 4:00 PM CDT (5:00 PM EDT) on Monday, July 10, 2023.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, INFORMATION & COURTESY COORDINATION:

For further information regarding this notice, please contact the USDOT Office of the Secretary via email at SS4A@dot.gov, or call Paul Teicher at (202) 366-4114. A TTD is available at (202)-366-3993.

In addition:

The Notice of Funding Opportunity is posted at:

<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/ss4a/fy23-nofo>

- Additional resources are available at:
<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A/resources>

The USDOT will regularly post answers to questions received from requests, and additional information. It is strongly recommended that all applicants check the following link frequently: [SS4A Frequently Asked Questions](#)

If you have any questions on the Circular Letter; and as a courtesy to foster good communication, as well as enable the Department to be able to provide administrative support if selected, please contact Stephane B. Seck-Birhame, Local Program Development Engineer at (217) 782-3972 or Babilible.Seck@illinois.gov, of your inquiries and application.

Sincerely,



George A. Tapas, P.E., S.E.
Engineer of Local Roads and Streets

cc: David Snyder, FHWA Illinois Division Administrator
Chris Hall, FHWA Illinois Deputy Division Administrator
Jon-Paul Kohler, FHWA Illinois Division
Alan Ho, FHWA Illinois Division
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Holly Bieneman, IDOT, Director, Office of Planning & Programming
Justan Mann, IDOT, Acting B.C., Safety Programs and Engineering
Shane Schneider, Illinois Association of County Engineers
Brad Cole, Illinois Municipal League
Jerry Crabtree, Township Officials of Illinois
Arnie Vegter, Township Highway Commissioners of Illinois