The purpose of this grant program is to provide financial assistance to eligible organizations to help advance the discipline of transportation statistics. These grants are authorized by section 5109 of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) (Public Law 105-224, codified at 49 U.S.C. 111(g)). BTS anticipates awarding up to $500,000 per year in grants for projects that (1) support development of the field of transportation statistics; and/or (2) advance research or development in transportation statistics.

I. Background—Advancing the Discipline of Transportation Statistics

The Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) is a separate operating organization within the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). Its mission is to lead in developing transportation data and information of high quality, and to advance their effective use in public and private transportation decision-making. In accomplishing this mission, BTS works to improve six key attributes of transportation data and analysis—quality, comparability, completeness, timeliness, relevance, and utility. Our ultimate goal is to make transportation better—to enhance safety, mobility, economic growth, the human and natural environment, and national security (the five strategic goals of the Department of Transportation). BTS’s role in this goal is to put together data and information that others need to make decisions concerning transportation. We collect data and compile, analyze, and publish statistics. Many others, both within and outside DOT, are involved in building this knowledge base and BTS could not do it alone.

While there are many excellent statistics programs, few are devoted to the intersection of these two disciplines. Bringing a better understanding of statistics to transportation data will improve data quality, increase utility (e.g., by improving measures of travel), and reduce costs (e.g., by using techniques to make data collection, analysis, and dissemination more efficient). BTS wants to foster the transportation statistics discipline and increase its quality and usefulness to the transportation community. This grants program is one way BTS is working toward this goal.

II. Eligibility Requirements

What Organizations May Apply?

BTS invites applications from public and private non-profit institutions of higher education. We strongly encourage Minority Serving Institutions, which have been traditionally under-represented in transportation statistics, to submit applications. If organizations partner on a project, the participants should submit a single application. You may submit more than one application as long as the applications are for separate and distinct projects.

What Projects Are Eligible for Funding?

For this cycle we are particularly interested in proposals on:

1. The development of techniques and pattern analyses that apply modern methods of biostatistical risk assessment to data on transportation injuries or fatalities;
2. The exploration of fresh ideas for the measurement of VMT (vehicle miles traveled) or AADT (average annual daily traffic)—new technology can be a component of this proposal, but it should also incorporate innovative statistical ideas for sampling and/or estimation; and
3. The application of small area estimation techniques to transportation.

What Are the Cost Sharing Requirements?

For awards of $100,000 or more, the recipient shall fund at least 50 percent of the project’s costs. The nonfederal match must come from sources other than the project sponsor, and must be cash contributions rather than in-kind contributions. In reviewing all applications, even those requesting less than $100,000, the degree of cost-sharing will be considered, with more weight given to cash contributions than in-kind services.

III. Application Contents

For more information about sending your application, please refer to the
This can be part of the Project Narrative. It will be evaluated based on the merit and relevance of the proposed project in relation to the other applications received. BTS anticipates making multiple awards based on this solicitation. While BTS will select the most meritorious proposals, we may choose to not award all available funds. Upon receiving an application, BTS will conduct an initial review to determine if it meets the eligibility criteria and contains all of the items specified under the Application Contents section of this announcement. A BTS evaluation committee will then review each complete application from an eligible recipient using the evaluation criteria listed below (the order of criteria does not designate priority) and the BTS Director will select the final grants. The evaluation criteria are:

(1) How well does the proposal support BTS’s strategic goals of improving the quality, comparability, completeness, timeliness, relevance, and utility of transportation data? How well does the proposal serve the broad transportation interests of the United States?

(2) How innovative is the proposed activity? To what extent is the work being accomplished elsewhere?

(3) How much experience has the applicant demonstrated in one or more of the following areas—collecting, analyzing, storing, or disseminating transportation data, particularly data collected or disseminated by BTS, and working with theoretical statistical issues concerning transportation data?

(4) Does the applicant have the professional qualifications and team members necessary for satisfactory performance of the proposed activity?

(5) How well does the technical approach and proposed costs reflect an understanding of the procedures necessary to complete the required tasks?

(6) To what degree does the proposal include cost-sharing? More weight will be given to proposals with cash contributions than in-kind services. For awards of $100,000 or more, BTS requires cash contributions of 50 percent toward the total project’s cost.

VI. BTS Involvement

BTS involvement, if any, will vary by award. If you anticipate BTS involvement, you must note this in your project narrative and any support BTS provides will be specified in the award agreement. BTS will assign a liaison to serve as the primary contact regarding the grant.

VII. Terms and Conditions of Award

(1) Prior to award, each grantee will be required to complete additional government application forms, such as OMB SF–424B (Assurances—Nonconstruction Programs) and with the certification requirements of 49 CFR Part 20, Department of Transportation New Restrictions on Lobbying, and 49 CFR Part 29, Department of Transportation Government-Wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-Procurement) and Government-Wide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Grants).

(2) Each grantee shall submit a program implementation plan no more than one month after award. The BTS liaison will review and comment, if necessary.

(3) Each grantee shall submit quarterly progress reports, a draft final report, and a final report that reflects the BTS liaison’s comments.

Dated: July 1, 2001.

Ashish Sen,
Director, Bureau of Transportation Statistics.

[FR Doc. 01–16967 Filed 7–5–01; 8:45 am]

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Customs Service

Announcement of Changes to the Eligibility Requirements for Participation in Remote Location Filing Prototype Two

AGENCY: Customs Service, Department of the Treasury.