



Getting Ready to Innovate

Request for Proposals

Application Due Date: May 31, 2018

Summary

Purpose:

This grant opportunity is intended to support the development of program innovations designed to increase the availability and accessibility of community transportation services for people with disabilities and older adults. Proposed innovations must have as their purpose the removal of barriers to transportation and expansion of mobility options. Applicants under this opportunity have an idea for an innovation that can fill current gaps in service and is likely to meet identified needs. Unlike a project that is ready to implement, the proposed innovation needs to be more fully developed, may not yet have full support from the transportation, aging and disability communities and may not have fully engaged the active participation of older adults people with disabilities and caregivers. These projects will serve as incubators to test and refine innovative ideas and develop community support and commitment to move toward full implementation. The process of innovation development to be supported under this grant program is meant to prepare and refine the innovative idea, and may include a pilot test and involve early innovation steps. Funded projects will be expected to include these specific elements:

- An inclusive process that engages older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers in all phases of the project (e.g., creation of an advisory group, focus groups, surveys, etc.);
- Collaboration involving local transportation, aging and disability organizations and stakeholders;
- Coordination with local transportation planning processes and exploration of funding options to support the innovation;

- Data collection to identify current transportation options, gaps, needs and user preferences.
- Development of a framework for moving the concept forward toward full implementation after the grant period ends.

Funding Amount

Grants of up to \$20,000 each will be awarded to as many as ten communities for a six month period.

Qualified Applicants

Local and regional private nonprofit or government organizations may apply for this funding opportunity. Eligible applicants include (but are not limited to) the following: Public Transit Agencies; Councils of Government; Metropolitan Planning Organizations; Tribal agencies (e.g., Title VI Aging Programs, Tribal Transit Agencies); Area Agencies on Aging; Community Action Agencies; Centers for Independent Living; ARCs (Intellectual Disability service organizations); and other community organizations involved in the administration, delivery or coordination of public transit, human services transportation, aging, or disability services.

Key Dates

4/18/18	RFP issued/posted on NADTC website
4/25/18	Application Portal opens
5/9/18	Teleconference for Interested Applicants
5/31/18	Proposal Due Date
7/16/18	Date of grant award announcement (Approximate)
7/16/18	Grantees begin their work
12/31/18	End date of grant activity

Getting Ready to Innovate

Planning to Increase Transportation Access

The National Aging and Disability Transportation Center is inviting applications for planning grants designed to set the stage for implementation of program innovations. Program innovations have as their purpose to increase accessible transportation options for older adults and people with disabilities and maximize the utilization of Section 5310 and other federal funding investments.

Program Goal

Set the stage for implementation of program innovations to increase accessible transportation.

This six-month planning grant opportunity is intended to support communities to fully develop program innovations that emerge from the local coordinated transit/human services planning process and/or a community's assessment of their mobility needs. Projects will serve as incubators to test and refine ideas and develop stakeholder and community support to move toward implementation. Proposed innovations must have as their purpose the removal of barriers to transportation and expansion of mobility options. Innovations are creative, customer and community responsive, integrated within the broader community transportation service system with the potential to bring about systems change and have the potential to be supported under Section 5310.

Objective

Support the development of program innovations that will increase the availability and accessibility of community transportation services for people with disabilities and older adults. Development of innovations to be supported under this grant program will include: assessment of community transportation needs, including collection of data to identify gaps, needs and user preferences; coordination with local transportation planning and with transportation and human services stakeholders; engagement of older adults, people with disabilities, family caregivers and the broader community in an inclusive planning process; and creation of a framework for full implementation.

Outcomes

Projects supported by this grant program are expected to put in place a community-specific framework that sets the stage for full implementation of program innovations that enhance accessible transportation. Related outcomes of these development projects may include:

- Increased understanding of, and support for, accessible transportation in the grantee community;
- Identification of the community's needs and preferences for increasing transportation accessibility;
- Improved coordination among all relevant community stakeholder groups, especially the local/regional coordinated transit/human services transportation planning process;
- Adoption of inclusive practices that fully engage older adults and people with disabilities, including current users and non-users of transportation services, in development of the proposed innovation.

Scope

Ten (10) grants of up to \$20,000 each (totaling \$200,000) will be funded for six (6) months. Grant funds will be utilized to support the development process that results in creation of a framework for full implementation of the local innovation. Grant funds will also support travel to a two-day kick-off workshop.

Eligible Applicants

Local and regional private nonprofit or government organizations may apply for this funding opportunity. Eligible applicants include (but are not limited to) community organizations involved in the administration, delivery or coordination of public transit, human services transportation, aging, or disability services, such as the following: Public Transit Agencies; Councils of Government; Metropolitan Planning Organizations; Tribal agencies (e.g., Title VI Aging Programs, Tribal Transit Agencies); Area Agencies on Aging; Community Action Agencies; Centers for Independent Living; ARCs (Intellectual Disability service organizations).

Preference will be given to applications submitted by public transportation, aging or disability organizations, especially current or potential Section 5310 recipients or subrecipients, such as:

- Public and human service transportation providers;
- Planning organizations that are direct or designated recipients of section 5310 funds;
- Aging, disability (physical, intellectual, or otherwise) or human services organizations that serve seniors and people with disabilities, reflecting required participants in the coordinated plan.

Note: For-profit organizations are not eligible to apply; however, applicants are encouraged to coordinate with appropriate for-profit transportation providers.

Primary Contact

Melissa Gray, NADTC Program Manager

nadtcgrant@nadtc.org 202-872-0888

Definitions

Accessible transportation is the passport to independent living for everyone. Mobility means having transport services going where and when one wants to travel; being informed about the services; knowing how to use them; being able to use them; and having the means to pay for them. Accessible transportation encompasses: public [and human services] transport services; related operational procedures, ticketing, and travel information; and the design of such vehicles, terminals, and stops; intercity, regional, national, and international transport by motor coaches, railway, marine vessels, and aircraft; intermodal linkages; personal vehicles; and the pedestrian infrastructure.” (Suen and Mitchell, “Accessible Transportation and Mobility,” Transportation Research Board, Committee on Accessible Transportation, 2000; additions noted in brackets)

Inclusiveness assumes that people with disabilities and older adults actively participate in advisory, decision-making and leadership capacities in planning, developing and oversight of community transportation services. (Derived from: Inclusive Coordinated Transportation Planning Partnership Project, supported by the U.S. Administration for Community Living)

Innovations in transportation/mobility could involve making changes to a longstanding program (but doing things in different ways), or developing a new program or service. Potential innovations include (but are not limited to) development of: new services; new approaches to service delivery or program oversight; new solutions to longstanding problems; new technological applications to enhance accessibility; new solutions to address old challenges. Innovations may be intended to provide better solutions to meet new requirements or respond more effectively to previously unarticulated needs. Transportation innovations, as used here, may be totally original or a creative adaptation of an approach that has worked in other places, program settings or to serve other populations. (Definition derived, in part, from Wikipedia.)

Output measures are defined as the products and services delivered. These are often stated as amounts (e.g., number of products or services) during a reporting period (e.g., 6 months). Outputs do not tell you anything about the actual results achieved or the impact of the products or services delivered.

Outcome measures represent the specific result(s) a program is intended to achieve. An outcome is not what the program produced (outputs) but the consequences or impact of those products and services. Outcomes are measurable and typically identify in precise ways how the

project will impact the community (e.g., seniors, specific ethnic/cultural groups, caregivers, community agencies). Anticipated outcome(s) are ways in which the project will benefit seniors and the community. Outcome measures include:

End Outcomes (Objectives): the ultimate outcomes the program has been designed to achieve. This is the most ambitious outcome or result that program managers can affect or influence and for which they are willing to be held responsible.

Intermediate Outcomes: A critical outcome or result that must occur in order to reach the end outcome/objective. Progress must be made toward the intermediate outcome before you can achieve the end outcome. (From: Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Evaluation Division)

Systems change is a shift in the way that a community makes decisions about policies, programs, and the allocation of its resources — and, ultimately, in the way it delivers services to its citizens.” (Toolkit for Federal Staff Who Work with Comprehensive Community Initiatives)

Potential Innovations

While these planning grants are focused on getting ready to innovate, nevertheless, applicants are expected to identify their current ideas and plans for improving transportation accessibility in their community. Proposed innovations may address, but are not limited to, the following:

- Travel training
- Volunteer transportation
- Accessible pathways (e.g., curb cuts, sidewalks, accessible signals)
- Way-finding technology/signage
- Same day service
- Door-to-door, door through door service
- Ride-sharing
- Mobility management/travel counseling
- One-call/one-click

Deliverables

- 1) Development of a partnership of critical community stakeholders (e.g., public transit, aging and disability organizations and others) that comes together to guide the work of the project to improve transportation accessibility for older adults and people with disabilities. This group must work in close coordination with the existing public transit/human services regional plan and other relevant community efforts to address accessible transportation.
- 2) Adoption of inclusive planning practices to meaningfully engage older adults and people with disabilities, including riders and non-users of transportation, as well as

- the broader community, in the planning process. Inclusive practices include focus groups, surveys, advisory bodies, community forums and other formal and informal efforts to encourage involvement.
- 3) Identification of community needs, gaps in service and user preferences for improving transportation accessibility for older adults and people with disabilities through data collection and information gathering.
 - 4) Flesh out the selected transportation accessibility innovation that emerges from the identification of the community's needs and preferences. A pilot test or early implementation steps may be undertaken to determine the usefulness and viability of the selected innovation for increasing transportation access. As a result of the planning grant, grantees should be able to provide detailed responses to the following questions:
 - a. What is the innovation?
 - b. Why was this innovation selected?
 - c. Who supports it?
 - d. How will it address identified accessibility needs and preferences?
 - 5) Create a framework for implementation of the selected innovation that addresses:
 - a. What organization will be responsible for implementing it?
 - b. What role will each partner organization play in implementation?
 - c. What funding sources will support implementation?
 - d. What are the anticipated barriers and challenges likely to impact implementation and how will they be addressed?
 - e. How will success be measured?

Involvement of Older Adults and People with Disabilities

The importance of considering the experiences and perceptions of transportation users and potential riders cannot be overstated. Projects must engage older adults and people with disabilities and include activities to obtain input and guidance from them throughout the project. Applicants are strongly encouraged to incorporate the perspectives of older adults and people with disabilities into their grant proposals.

Key Partnerships

Partnerships and collaboration among public transportation, aging, disability and other human services organizations that serve people with disabilities and older adults are essential for the success of these grant projects. Coordination with the local transit-human services planning process is required. Collaboration with key community organizations that represent older adults and people with disabilities and/or provide/arrange transportation (e.g., local

transportation providers, community/civic groups) is also important to the success of these projects.

Sustainability

Ongoing funding and sustainability of efforts undertaken by NADTC grants are primary concerns and will be addressed by NADTC and awarded grantees, working together during the grant period. At a minimum, grantees will be expected to work to build ongoing community support and be willing to seek funding to continue the efforts begun during the grant. NADTC encourages and will offer information and technical assistance to support grantee efforts to develop applications for Section 5310 funds.

NOTE: Grantees should not assume that additional funding will be available to support activities beyond the six-month period offered through this funding opportunity.

NADTC Support and Technical Assistance

- 1) Convene a kick-off workshop for awarded grantees.
- 2) Develop a plan for facilitating regular peer exchange among grantees.
- 3) Develop educational webinars and on-line sessions for grantees featuring expert presentations on best practices in planning and other relevant topics and leveraging lessons learned in the Administration for Community Living's *Inclusive Coordinated Transportation Planning Project*.
- 4) Provide and document provision of information and technical assistance to support grantees in improving local transportation accessibility.
- 5) Track progress and document grantees' work to develop and implement innovations and approaches in their local transportation system, including:
 - a. Connections between locally identified needs and the program innovation/approach being developed through the grant.
 - b. Increased inclusion of older adults and people with disabilities in community transportation planning, development, service delivery and oversight.
 - c. Integration of "specialized transportation" services, including those developed or enhanced through this grant, within the larger statewide/metro planning processes.
- 6) Develop a report for FTA that identifies how the planning projects developed by grantees through this project lay the groundwork for adoption of program innovations to increase transportation accessibility and how the planning practices utilized by

grantees might be used by local communities to enhance their applications for Section 5310 and other FTA funding opportunities.

Proposal Format and Submission

Applications consist of the following: **Grant Application Form, Narrative, Grant Budget Form and 3 Letters of Commitment**. Only the attachments specified in the application instructions will be accepted. Applicants are encouraged to submit the application on-line (See Application Instructions document for information on how to access the online system).

**All proposals must be submitted on-line
no later than 11:59 pm on May 31, 2018.**

Proposals received after the due date and time, as well as those submitted by fax or mail will be deemed non-responsive. All questions related to this solicitation should be directed to Melissa Gray by phone (202) 872-0888 or email (nadtcgrant@nadtc.org).

A teleconference for interested applicants will be held at 3 pm ET on May 9, 2018. Call in information will be posted on the NADTC website (www.nadtc.org). Questions can be directed to Melissa Gray at nadtcgrant@nadtc.org.

Application Evaluation Criteria

Incomplete or non-responsive proposals will not be considered. Only proposals that meet the Minimum Criteria detailed below will be reviewed.

Minimum Criteria used to determine acceptability of application

All applications received will be screened to determine acceptability by a NADTC staff team.

ALL of the criteria listed below must be met. Applications that are missing key pieces of information (e.g., unanswered questions on the Grant Application Form, fewer than 3 Letters of Commitment) will be considered nonresponsive and will not be forwarded for review.

1. Application received by the deadline.
2. Application submitted electronically
3. Application package (consisting of **Grant Application Form, Narrative, Grant Budget Form and 3 Letters of Commitment**) is complete.
4. Application submitted by a Qualified Organization.
5. Request for funding does not exceed \$20,000.

Explanation of Ratings

Applications will be rated on the basis of highly recommended (HR), recommended (R) or not recommended (NR) in the following areas:

1. The significance of the planning grant's goal and its fit with the goal set for this funding opportunity; and major activities to be undertaken in order to accomplish the required deliverables. (Question 1)
2. How this planning project will address current conditions and help move the applicant community toward addressing accessible transportation for older adults and people with disabilities. (Question 2)
3. Anticipated challenges and barriers and how they will be addressed. (Question 3)
4. Impact: Proposed output and outcome measures; expectations of success based on community conditions; plans for sustaining the effort begun by this grant project. (Question 4)
5. Organizational and partner strength and ability to accomplish the work of the grant. (Question 5 and the Budget)

Application review

An independent Review Committee, consisting of individuals with expertise in aging, disability and transportation will be convened. Only applications that meet Minimum Criteria will be reviewed. Each accepted application will be reviewed independently by at least two members of the Review Committee. Recommendations for selection will be reviewed by the Federal Transit Administration.

The review committee will make recommendations for funding based on the following guidelines:

- Applications rated as highly recommended (HR) are those that receive HR on at least these review criteria: 1, 2, 3 and 4 and receive no NR ratings.
- Applications rated as recommended (R) are those that receive R or HR in at least these categories: 1, 2, 3 and 4 and receive no more than one NR rating.
- Applications rated as not recommended (NR) are those that receive NR in two or more criteria or receive an NR rating in any of these criteria: 1, 2, 3 or 4.

Application Package

The Application Package consists of the Grant Application Form; the Narrative; the Grant Budget Form; and 3 Letters of Commitment.

Grant Application Form

All requested information must be provided.

I. Applicant Information

(1) Applicant Name, Address, Contact Information

(2) Agency/Organization is: check one from the list. Applicant must fit one of the categories provided: nonprofit or government agency. Applications will not be accepted from for-profit organizations.

(3) Agency/Organization Type: check one from the list; if *other*, please provide specific information in the space provided.

II. Target population

Applications must focus on older adults and people with disabilities residing in the community and all older adults and people with disabilities in the community should be able to benefit from the work to be undertaken. However, applicants may identify a subset of the broader target populations as needing specific attention, such as one or more specific cultural or ethnic groups, older adults with particular characteristics (e.g., physical disabilities, dementia) or specific disability groups (e.g., persons with visual impairment, developmental disabilities).

(1) Age: check one from the list; if *other*, please provide specific information in the space provided (e.g., adults with disabilities and seniors 60+). Adults younger than 60 may be included in the target population but a primary focus on seniors is required.

(2) Disability: check all that apply from the list; if *other*, please provide specific information in the space provided.

(3) Race/Ethnicity: check all that apply from the list; if *other*, please provide specific information in the space provided.

(4) Income: check one or both of the named options. (a) If “low income” is checked, the definition to be followed by the project should be specified (e.g., 100% Federal Poverty Level [FPL]). (b) If “other income range” is checked, the definition to be followed by the project should be specified.

III. Geographic Area

- (1) Type of geographic area (i.e., urban, suburban, rural, Tribal): check all that apply from the list.
- (2) Brief description of the area: may include the percent urban/suburban/rural of the area, square mileage, and/or a descriptor such as “very spread out,” “densely populated,” “blighted urban area,” rugged, mountain terrain, etc.” that provides reviewers with a concise picture of the area.

Narrative

The narrative must be written in 12 point Arial font. Space limits are specified below. The Narrative includes the Project Summary and the Narrative Questions.

Project Summary

Provide a specific and concise sketch of the project, the purpose (overall goal), objectives and the specific outcome(s) you expect to attain from the Getting Ready to Innovate Grant. (Limited to 100 words)

Narrative Questions

Responses must adhere to the specified word limits which are incorporated into the electronic application.

1. **What is the goal of your proposed planning project and why is it important in your community to develop a program innovation for increasing accessible transportation? How will you accomplish the goal?** (Limited to 1,000 words)

Applicants should state the goal of the planning project clearly and briefly, discuss why the proposed project is important and its significance in terms of the local area’s development of transportation and mobility options and the ability of older adults and people with disabilities to live and thrive in the community. Applicants should also describe the major activities to be undertaken as part of a planning process that accomplishes all required deliverables within the timeframe of the six-month planning grant. Use the outline below as a guide:

- State the overall goal and anticipated outcome of this planning project;
- Describe the community’s current array of transportation and mobility options: what is known and what information is needed to collect during this planning project;
- Describe the project’s innovation idea/concept and the reasons why this innovation was selected to improve transportation access in the community. Include how the chosen

innovation will respond to particular community conditions. (Note: The selected innovation is the baseline from which this planning project will be developed, although it may change somewhat during the planning process);

- Describe current partnerships among critical community stakeholders (transportation, aging and disability organizations and others), previous efforts involving partners to improve transportation and plans for strengthening partnerships through this planning project;
 - Describe how older adults and people with disabilities have been engaged in transportation planning and specific plans for increasing their engagement through this project.
 - Provide a detailed sketch of the planning process in which the project will engage, noting major activities and the timeline for completing all deliverables within the six-months' timeframe of the project. Required deliverables are listed on pages 5-6 of the RFP.
2. **How will this planning project help your community move forward in addressing the need for accessible transportation?** (Limited to 500 words)

The response should address the following:

- Discuss briefly the most relevant and pertinent efforts in the community, both current and in the recent past, that were/are intended to improve community transportation accessibility (e.g., efforts related to transit, paratransit, human services transportation, livable communities, walkability, bicycling, accessible technology, coordination, planning, mobility management, travel training). Include things that have worked, as well as those that did not succeed;
- Provide detail about the community's current use of federal, state and local funds to support transportation and describe its success or past efforts in accessing and utilizing federal funding (especially, but not limited to, Section 5310 funds). Include information about pending applications or other potential funding.
- Provide numerical and descriptive data to quantify or approximate current ridership and the current level of accessible transportation available to older adults and people with disabilities, including unmet needs (local, state and/or national data may be used). Anecdotal information may be included to paint a picture of current community conditions.
- Discuss how the proposed planning project will address current community conditions and priorities and help move accessible transportation to the forefront.

3. **What challenges and barriers do you expect will impact this planning project and how will they be addressed?** (Limited to 500 words)

Applicants should identify potential challenges and barriers, and identify strategies for overcoming them. The response should:

- Discuss likely challenges to the project's success posed by past community efforts that did not succeed, tensions or conflicts regarding different options for improving community transportation, or competition between the aging and disability communities or between transit and human services;
- Identify potential barriers to success, such as lack of funding, lack of community consensus, competing priorities;
- Describe the strategies to be used to address anticipated challenges and barriers, and discuss why these efforts are likely to succeed and help to ensure the overall success of the proposed planning project.

4. **Discuss in detail what you expect to achieve during this project, identifying the output and outcome measures you will use to determine your success. Include your plans for sustaining your efforts beyond this planning project.** (Limited to 500 words)

- Identify at least 3 output measures and 1 outcome measure to be used to determine the success of your proposed project. (See definitions on pages 4-5 of the RFP.)
- Discuss how the proposed planning project to increase transportation access responds to current and anticipated community conditions described in response to question 2
- Identify conditions in the community that will support the effort to increase transportation accessibility for the target population as well as other motivating factors for increasing transportation accessibility in this community (e.g., the local transit-human services coordinated plan, local livability initiative);
- Describe the broader community's attitudes and the willingness of people with disabilities and older adults to work with your organization, as well as established relationships or previous work that included older adults and/or people with disabilities as partners;
- Identify committed project partners (agencies and organizations) and describe their planned contributions to the project;
- Specify the roles that older adults and people with disabilities, will play in the proposed project and discuss how the partnerships and citizen involvement will help to ensure success;

- Make the case that the right players (your organization, project partners, and community members) are engaged and committed to this effort and why conditions are right- in this community, at this time - for this innovation to succeed.

5. **What assets and advantages do your organization and committed project partners bring to the table for this planning project to create a framework for increasing transportation accessibility in your community?** (Limited to 500 words)

Applicants should include information on grant management experience and describe their role in working for and/or providing accessible transportation for older adults and people with disabilities. The applicant agency and project partners together should include organizations that administer aging, disability and transportation programs. Responses should also address:

- Current involvement in the coordinated transit-human services transportation planning process and/or other local or regional transportation planning experience;
- Experience managing a Section 5310 program or other transportation programs (including New Freedom or JARC) funded with federal, state or local funds that provided transportation services to older adults and/or people with disabilities;
- Experience collecting quantitative and descriptive data on transportation usage by the target population and a commitment to collect data under this project to track progress in achieving identified outputs and outcomes.

Budget

The proposed budget must be provided on the **NADTC Grant Budget Form** and may include the following items. In no case may the budget request exceed \$20,000. Matching funds are not required but applicants are encouraged to consider specifying any additional staff supports (including management support) to be provided by the applicant agency, as well as other administrative costs that the applicant agency will cover.

- Personnel costs should specify salary costs and associated fringe benefits to carry out project activities.
- Meeting/training costs may include the costs of holding one or more community forums plus costs associated with smaller collaborative meetings. Such costs may include space rental, copying materials, AV equipment rental, speaker fees/travel costs. Food/beverage costs are not eligible expenses.
- Travel costs are for staff travel and must include funds to travel to Washington, DC for a two day kick-off workshop.
- Consultant fees and travel anticipated by the applicant should be included as a separate category in the budget.

- Other direct costs may include office space rental/utilities (to be calculated based on personnel costs), telephone/fax, photocopying, printing, postage, project related supplies, computer costs (equipment may NOT be purchased; costs related to personnel usage only), marketing/media/outreach costs, focus group/survey costs (if applicable).
- Indirect costs may be included in the budget. Details regarding how indirect costs are calculated, including a copy of the organization's approved Indirect Rate, must be submitted as part of the final budget that grantees must develop within two weeks of award notification.

Letters of Commitment

Evidence of commitment from the 3 key partners listed below must be included in the grant application. The letters of commitment should specifically describe the planned role of the project partner in the planning project, anticipated support (including monetary or in-kind support) to be provided and a list of anticipated project activities in which the partner will be involved. Note: A maximum of 3 letters of commitment, as described below, will be reviewed.

1. One letter of commitment is required from the local entity responsible for the 5310 coordinated transit-human services plan indicating willingness to participate in the project and to consider incorporating the proposed program innovation/approach into the area's funding proposal. If the applicant is that entity, then a letter of commitment from another key transportation provider must be submitted.
2. One letter of commitment is required from the local Area Agency on Aging (AAA). If the applicant is from a state that does not include AAAs, the most prominent aging organization in the community (e.g., county office on aging) is acceptable.
3. One letter of commitment is required from the local Center for Independent Living (CIL). If there is no local CIL, then the most prominent disability organization in the community is acceptable.