



CMVOST Grant Programs NOFO Funding Conference FAQs

The following questions were submitted to FMCSA by attendees of the CMV Operator Safety Training (CMVOST) Grant Funding Conference on March 13, 2024.

Topic 1: CMV Operator Safety Training (CMVOST)

1. **How can we check the Veterans Administration (VA) approval?**

Per Appendix C of the NOFO, applicants are required to submit supporting documentation that states the institution is approved by State Approving Agencies and VA to accept VA benefits. FMCSA recommends applicants to contact the VA directly with further questions on eligibility and supporting documentation of approval.

2. **Section C, 1.1 lists eligible entities a-l. How is "Small Business" defined for purposes of the grant. Is a non-small business that meets the requirements of 1.2 and 1.3 eligible?**

The Office of Advocacy generally defines a small business as an independent business having fewer than 500 employees.

Yes, per Sections C of the NOFO, if a small business is approved by the U.S. Department of Labor as an eligible training provider AND they accept Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) grants AND are approved by the State Approving Agencies and VA to accept VA benefits, then they would be eligible.

3. **Does the CMVOST Grant reimburse for medical cards, CLP and drug testing? Or is it just tuition and indirect costs?**

Yes, per Section D.6 of the NOFO, the tuition may include such costs for DOT physicals, required DOT drug testing fees, and driver licensing fees, if they are standard published elements that are included in the published tuition rate.

4. **In the application, can we put \$200,000 as Federal Funding and any other additional amount as Non-Federal/School Share? Or does the overall total have to be \$200,000 or less?**

Per Section B of the NOFO, FMCSA will limit Federal funding to a total amount of \$200,000 per award.

5. Will an accredited institution of higher education need any other CMVOST eligibility information?

No, if you are a DOE accredited institution, you do not need to meet any other requirements besides being listed as a training provider on the Training Provider Registry. For questions on eligibility, review CMVOST NOFO Section C (page 8 of 44) where you can find the eligible entities for the CMVOST grant program. Also, for additional eligibility criteria, review Section C 1.2 and 1.3.

6. If our community college does not accept the GI Bill benefits, would that disqualify us?

No, per Section C,1.2, of the NOFO, all applicants must meet one of the two criteria: educational institutions accredited by an accreditation agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or non-accredited institutions that are approved by the DOL as eligible training providers and who accept WIOA grants; and approved by the SAAs, and the VA to accept VA benefits will also be considered for funding. Applicants only need to meet one of these two criteria.

7. Can funds be used to pay for an eligible student to retake a whole course if they failed?

No, students who previously received funding on CMVOST grants are not eligible to retake a course.

8. We have to provide estimates on anticipated students, enrolled, graduated, and obtaining a CDL. Should we base these estimates on the CMVOST funding only, or should we use the base of the estimates on our own organization as a whole?

For your project narrative and SF-424 and SF-424A, applicants should only note what will be used with the CMVOST funding.

9. What type of proof do we have to supply and how do we determine if a student is eligible for funding? Is it possible to provide partial assistance to students who are able to come up with some partial amount on their own.

The NOFO does not specify how each institution should verify the student's eligibility for funding.

Yes, institutions can provide partial funding or full funding to students receiving CMVOST funding.

10. If an application is going to focus on underserved communities as their primary focus, will they need to be accredited by the VA?

Yes, per Section C,1.2, of the NOFO, eligible applicants must meet one of the two criteria: educational institutions accredited by an accreditation agency recognized by the U.S Department of Education or non-accredited institutions

that are approved by the DOL as eligible training providers and who accept WIOA grants; and approved by the SAAs, and the VA to accept VA benefits will also be considered for funding. Applicants only need to meet one of these two criteria.

11. What do you recommend for proof of refugee status?

FMCSA does specify how grantees should verify provide proof of refugee status. Upon admission to the United States, the Department of Homeland Security provides refugees with a form I-94, Arrival/Departure Record and this may serve as proof of refugee status.

12. Is the \$200,000 amount for each year of the program or for the total four years of the grant?

Per Section B of the NOFO, FMCSA will limit Federal funding to a total amount of \$200,000 per award. This is for the full period of performance.

13. Do applicants need to break out budget totals for veterans, underserved students or refugees, or can one table of estimates cover all categories?

Yes, if you know what the breakdown for these communities would be, you are encouraged to list them because FMCSA prioritizes funding that serves these groups of people.

Topic 2: NOFO Structure

1. What is considered a project versus an activity?

A project consists of one or more priorities achieving an overarching goal and must contain a distinct title, separate/distinct project narratives, and separate/distinct budget narratives and line-item budgets (applications with multiple budgets must include a comprehensive budget). For each goal, you will list objectives to accomplish that goal. Under each objective, you must list activities that facilitate meeting your goal(s).

2. How long are Title VI forms valid?

Title VI forms are valid for only one year and must be updated annually.

3. Regarding Title VI Assurance and Compliance requirements, does this need to be sent for approval before submission on Grants.gov?

Yes, applicants must submit an Assurance and Compliance Plan to Mr. Lester Finkle, FMCSA National Title VI Program Manager, at lester.finkle@dot.gov. The Title VI requirement's plan must be approved by Mr. Finkle before FMCSA considers awarding a grant.

Topic 3: Finding More Information and Help

1. Will technical assistance webinar presentations be available to view?

A Recording of the CMVOST hour-long webinar, along with a PDF version of the slides and Q&A document, will be posted to Grants.gov. In addition, the recordings, a PDF version of the slides and Q&A document will be available on our A&I webpage.

2. How much notice is typically given to applicants to gather the necessary data for potential projects?

FMCSA strives to get notice of funding opportunities (NOFO) in a timely manner. While the 2024 NOFO has a window of 45 days, FMCSA aims to make it around 60 days in the future. Work can be done proactively on applications, for example in the Title VI requirements. Since those requirements are standard year-after-year, you do not have to wait until the NOFO is published to begin that section.

3. Will I receive the technical scoring of my submissions if it is rejected?

If you do not make it past the Intake Review, you will be contacted with an explanation of why you did not make it past the review. If your application is rejected, there will be a letter explaining why it did not receive approval.

4. Can an awardee seek additional grant funding sources from other agencies/sources?

There is no restriction in seeking additional funding from different agencies or grants.