

**The Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
Fiscal Year 2021 Intercity Bus Security Grant Program**

NOTE: If you are going to apply for this funding opportunity and have not obtained an Employer Identification Number (EIN), a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number, are not currently registered in the System for Award Management (SAM), or your SAM registration is not active, please take immediate action to obtain an EIN and DUNS Number, if applicable, and then register immediately in SAM or, if applicable, renew your SAM registration. It may take four weeks or more after you submit your SAM registration before your registration is active in SAM, then an additional 24 hours for Grants.gov to recognize your information. Information on obtaining a DUNS number and registering in SAM is available from Grants.gov at:

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>. Detailed information regarding DUNS, EIN, and SAM is also provided in Section D of this NOFO under the subsection titled “How to Register to Apply.” Detailed information regarding the time required for each registration is also provided in Section D of this NOFO under the subsection titled “Other Key Dates.”

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A. Program Description

1. Issued By

U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)/Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)/Grant Programs Directorate (GPD)

2. Assistance Listings Number

97.057

3. Assistance Listings Title

Intercity Bus Security Grant Program

4. Funding Opportunity Title

Fiscal Year 2021 Intercity Bus Security Grant Program

5. Funding Opportunity Number

DHS-21-[GPD]-[057]-[000]-[01]

6. Authorizing Authority for Program

Section 1513 of the *Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007* (Pub. L. No. 110-53) (6 U.S.C. § 1182)

7. Appropriation Authority for Program

Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2021 (Pub. L. No. 116-260)

8. Announcement Type

Initial

9. Program Category

Preparedness: Infrastructure Security

10. Program Overview, Objectives, and Priorities

a. Overview

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Intercity Bus Security Grant Program (IBSGP) is one of four grant programs that constitute the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) DHS/Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) focus on transportation infrastructure security activities. These grant programs are part of a comprehensive set of measures authorized by Congress and implemented by DHS to help strengthen the nation's critical infrastructure against potential terrorist attacks. IBSGP provides funds to intercity bus companies to protect critical surface transportation infrastructure and the travelling public from acts of terrorism. Among the five basic homeland security missions noted in the [DHS Strategic Plan](#), the IBSGP supports the goal to Strengthen National Preparedness and Resilience.

The 2018-2022 FEMA Strategic Plan creates a shared vision for managing the risks posed by terrorism and sets an ambitious, yet achievable, path forward to unify and further professionalize emergency management across the country. IBSGP supports the goals of Building a Culture of Preparedness and of Readyng the Nation for Catastrophic Disasters.

We invite our stakeholders and partners to also adopt these priorities and join us in building a more prepared and resilient nation.

Finally, for FY 2021, DHS is focused on the criticality of information sharing and collaboration to building a national culture of preparedness and protecting against terrorism and other emerging threats to our national security. DHS and its homeland security mission were born from the “failures among federal agencies and between the federal agencies and state and local authorities to share critical information related to the threat of terrorism” prior to the September 11, 2001, attacks.¹ The threat profile has changed in the last two decades – we now face continuous cyber threats by sophisticated actors, threats to soft targets and crowded places, threats to our democratic election process and threats from new and emerging technologies. But information sharing and cooperation among state, local, and tribal authorities and federal agencies, including all DHS officials, is just as vital, and perhaps even more vital, today. Therefore, for FY 2021, we have identified three priority areas, tied to some of the most serious threats that recipients should address with their IBSGP funds. Perhaps most importantly, DHS will be focused on forging partnerships to strengthen information sharing and collaboration in each of these priority areas and looking for recipients to remove barriers to communication and cooperation with DHS and other federal agencies.

b. Objectives

Provide funds to eligible private operators of intercity over-the-road bus transportation systems to protect critical transportation infrastructure and travelling public from acts of terrorism, and to increase the resilience of the transit infrastructure.

c. Priorities

Given the evolving threat landscape, it is incumbent upon DHS/FEMA to continuously evaluate the national risk profile and set priorities that help ensure appropriate allocation of scarce security dollars. In assessing the national risk profile for FY 2021, three areas attract the most concern:

- 1) Enhancing cybersecurity;
- 2) Enhancing the protection of soft targets/crowded places; and
- 3) Addressing emerging threats (e.g., transnational criminal organizations, weapons of mass destruction [WMD], unmanned aerial systems [UASs], etc.).

Likewise, there are several enduring security needs that crosscut the homeland security enterprise. The following are second-tier priorities that help recipients implement a comprehensive approach to securing critical transportation infrastructure:

- 1) Effective planning;

¹ Homeland Security Act of 2002: Report Together with Minority and Dissenting Views 222, Select Committee on Homeland Security: 107th Congress, U.S. House of Representatives (2002) (H. Rpt. 107-609).

- 2) Training and awareness campaigns;
- 3) Equipment and capital projects; and
- 4) Exercises.

The table below provides a breakdown of these priority areas for the FY 2021 IBSGP, showing both the core capabilities enhanced and lifelines supported, as well as examples of eligible project types for each area. A detailed description of allowable investments for each project type is included in the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#). As discussed in Section E, projects that sufficiently address one or more of the three National Priorities (enhancing cybersecurity; enhancing the protection of soft targets/crowded places; or addressing emerging threats) will have their final review scores increased by a multiplier of twenty (20) percent.

FY 2021 IBSGP Funding Priorities

Priority Areas	Core Capabilities	Lifelines	Example Project Types
National Priorities			
Enhancing Cybersecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cybersecurity • Intelligence and information sharing • Planning • Public information and warning • Operational coordination • Screening, search, and detection • Access control and identity verification • Supply chain integrity and security • Risk management for protection programs and activities • Long-term vulnerability reduction • Situational assessment • Infrastructure systems • Operational communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and Security • Transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cybersecurity risk assessments • Projects that address vulnerabilities identified in cybersecurity risk assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improving cybersecurity of critical infrastructure to meet minimum levels identified by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) • Cybersecurity training and planning
Enhancing the Protection of Soft Targets/Crowded Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational coordination • Public information and warning • Intelligence and information sharing • Interdiction and disruption • Screening, search, and detection • Access control and identity verification • Physical protective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and Security • Transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical security enhancements at bus stations located in historically eligible Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) jurisdictions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) security cameras ○ Security screening equipment and technology for people and baggage ○ Access controls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fencing, barriers, gates, etc. • Remote disabling technology for over-the-road bus fleets

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> measures Risk management for protection programs and activities 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) technology Global Positioning Software (GPS)
Addressing Emerging Threats, such as Transnational Criminal Organizations, WMD and UAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interdiction and disruption Screening, search and detection Physical protective measures Intelligence and information sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety and Security Transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) detection equipment at bus stations located in historically eligible UASI jurisdictions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security screening equipment and technology for people and baggage Stand-off detection systems
Enduring Needs			
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Risk management for protection programs & activities Risk & disaster resilience assessment Threats and hazards identification Operational coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety and Security Transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> System-wide Security Risk Management Plans Continuity of Operations Plans Response Plans/Station Action Plans System-wide and/or asset-specific vulnerability assessments Efforts to strengthen governance integration between/among regional partners
Training & Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-term vulnerability reduction Public information & warning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety and Security Transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security training for employees, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic security awareness Active shooter/attacker Public awareness/preparedness campaigns
Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-term vulnerability reduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety and Security Transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security exercises to enhance prevention, response, and coordination capabilities related to the effects of a terrorist attack scenario

11. Performance Metrics

Performance metrics for this program are as follows:

- Percentage of funding allocated by the recipient to core capabilities to build or sustain the national priorities identified in the section above.

B. Federal Award Information

- Available Funding for the NOFO:** **\$2,000,000**
- Period of Performance:** **24 months**

Extensions to the period of performance are allowed. For additional information on period of performance extensions, please refer to Section H of this NOFO or the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#).

FEMA awards under this program only include one budget period, so it will be same as the period of performance. *See* 2 C.F.R. § 200.1 for definitions of “budget period” and “period of performance.”

- 3. Projected Period of Performance Start Date(s):** 10/01/2021
- 4. Projected Period of Performance End Date(s):** 09/30/2023
- 5. Funding Instrument Type:** Grant

C. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

Private operators providing intercity over-the-road bus transportation that have also completed a vulnerability assessment and developed a security plan, which the Secretary of Homeland Security has approved as described in Section 1531 of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (9/11 Act) (Pub. L. No. 110-53) (6 U.S.C. § 1181). Private operators are non-governmental entities that may include, but are not limited to, sole proprietorships, affiliates, parent companies and subsidiaries.

2. Applicant Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility for funding is further limited to applicants that meet one or both of the following criteria:

- Operate fixed-route intercity bus transportation providing services to one or more historically eligible UASI jurisdictions as indicated below.
- Operate a charter bus service using over-the-road buses and provide a minimum of 50 trips annually to one or more historically eligible UASI jurisdictions as indicated below.

The following definitions are applicable for the purpose of meeting FY 2021 IBSGP eligibility requirements:

- Charter bus service is defined as a bus service that operates neither over fixed- routes nor on regular schedules. Note: A charter bus service is characterized by the rental of a bus and the services of a driver to a person or group where all passengers embark and disembark at the same point. A charter bus service must use over-the-road buses.
- Fixed-route intercity bus service is defined as passenger transportation service provided to the general public for compensation over specified, predetermined, and published routes between cities or terminals using over-the-road-buses.
- An over-the-road bus is defined as a vehicle designated for long-distance transportation of passengers, characterized by integral construction with an elevated passenger deck located over a baggage compartment and at least 35 feet in length, with a capacity of more than 30 passengers. Only over-the-road buses are eligible for vehicle security enhancements through this program. Limousines, mini-coaches, school buses, or any other vehicle that does not fit the definition of an over-the-road bus are not eligible.

- A trip is defined as a single bus journey from an embarkation point to the furthest destination in that journey. For example, a trip from New York City to Denver to San Francisco would be considered a single trip. A trip is made to an historically eligible UASI jurisdiction if at any point in the trip the bus stops in an historically eligible UASI jurisdiction and embarks or disembarks passengers. For example, a trip from Newburgh, NY to New York City, NY to Charleston, WV is a trip to an historically eligible UASI jurisdiction if passengers embark or disembark in New York City.
- An historically eligible UASI jurisdiction is a high-risk urban area that has received UASI funding in the past.

List of Historically Eligible UASI Jurisdictions

State	Urban Area
Arizona	Phoenix
	Tucson
California	Anaheim-Santa Ana
	Bakersfield
	Bay Area
	Fresno
	Los Angeles-Long Beach
	Oxnard
	Riverside
	Sacramento
San Diego	
Colorado	Denver
Connecticut	Bridgeport
	New Haven
	Hartford
District of Columbia/Maryland/Virginia	National Capital Region
Florida	Fort Lauderdale
	Jacksonville
	Miami
	Orlando
	Tampa
Georgia	Atlanta
Hawaii	Honolulu
Illinois	Chicago
Indiana	Indianapolis
Kentucky	Louisville
Kansas/Missouri	Kansas City
Louisiana	Baton Rouge
	New Orleans
Maryland	Baltimore
Massachusetts	Boston
Michigan	Detroit

State	Urban Area
Minnesota	Twin Cities
Missouri/Illinois	St. Louis
Nebraska	Omaha
Nevada	Las Vegas
New Jersey	Jersey City-Newark
New York	Albany
	Buffalo
	New York City
	Rochester
	Syracuse
North Carolina	Charlotte
Ohio	Cincinnati
	Cleveland
	Columbus
	Toledo
Oklahoma	Oklahoma City
	Tulsa
Oregon	Portland
Pennsylvania	Pittsburgh
	Philadelphia
Puerto Rico	San Juan
Rhode Island	Providence
Tennessee	Memphis
	Nashville
Texas	Austin
	Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington
	El Paso
	Houston
	San Antonio
Utah	Salt Lake City
Virginia	Norfolk
	Richmond
Washington	Seattle
Wisconsin	Milwaukee

An application submitted by an otherwise eligible non-federal entity (i.e., the applicant) may be deemed ineligible when the person that submitted the application is not: 1) a ***current employee, personnel, official, staff, or leadership*** of the non-federal entity; and 2) ***duly authorized to apply*** for an award on behalf of the non-federal entity at the time of application.

Further, the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) must be a duly authorized current employee, personnel, official, staff or leadership of the recipient and ***provide an email address unique to the recipient at the time of application and upon any change in***

assignment during the period of performance. Consultants or contractors of the recipient are not permitted to be the AOR of the recipient.

3. Other Eligibility Criteria

a. National Incident Management System (NIMS) Implementation

Prior to allocation of any federal preparedness awards, recipients must ensure and maintain adoption and implementation of NIMS. The list of objectives used for progress and achievement reporting is on FEMA's website at <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/nims/implementation-training>.

Please see the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#) for more information on NIMS.

b. Application Limitations

- Eligible applicants may only submit one application; and
- Each application may only include one Investment Justification (IJ).

c. Vulnerability Assessment and Security Plan

To be eligible for the FY 2021 IBSGP, operators must have developed or updated their organization's Vulnerability Assessment and Security Plan (VASP) that must be based on a security assessment, such as the Baseline Assessment for Security Enhancement (BASE) performed by Transportation Security Inspectors-Surface from the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). Private operators providing transportation with an over-the-road bus system must have completed or updated their VASP within the past three years before the opening of the FY 2021 IBSGP application period. Additionally, a copy of the VASP certification must be submitted along with the application in order to be considered eligible. Failure to include this certification will result in the application being deemed ineligible. All operators must have completed or updated a VASP as required by Section 1531 of the 9/11 Act (6 U.S.C. § 1181) as follows:

- Assessments and security plans should include, as appropriate:
 - Identification and evaluation of critical assets and infrastructure, including buses, platforms, stations, terminals, and information systems;
 - Identification of vulnerabilities to those assets and infrastructure; and
 - Identification of gaps in physical security; passenger and cargo security; the security of programmable electronic devices, computers, or other automated systems that are used in providing over-the-road bus transportation; alarms, cameras, and other communications systems and utilities needed for over-the-road bus security purposes, including dispatching systems; emergency response planning; and employee training.
- Security plans should also include, as appropriate:
 - The identification of a security coordinator having authority to implement security actions, coordinate security improvements, and receive communications from appropriate federal officials regarding over-the-road bus security;
 - A list of needed capital and operational improvements;

- Procedures to be implemented or used by the operator in response to a terrorist attack, including evacuation and passenger communication plans that include individuals with access and functional needs;
- The identification of steps taken with state and local law enforcement agencies, emergency responders, and federal officials to coordinate security measures and plans for response to a terrorist attack;
- A strategy and timeline for conducting training to prepare frontline employees for potential security threats and conditions;
- Enhanced security measures to be taken by the operator when the Secretary of Homeland Security declares a period of heightened security risk; and
- Plans for providing redundant and backup systems required to ensure the continued operation of critical elements of the operator’s system in the event of a terrorist attack.

For additional information on the above requirements, please contact highwaysecurity@tsa.dhs.gov. Project requests will not be considered until bus operators develop and certify vulnerability assessments and security plans. See below for a template VASP certification statement.

Vulnerability Assessment and Security Plan Certification Statement

Applicants must certify that they have had a vulnerability assessment completed and a security evaluation preparedness plan developed or updated within the past three years. Failure to submit this certification or modifying the language in this certification may result in an application not be considered for funding. Applicants are also required to submit their vulnerability assessments and security plans to DHS/FEMA upon request.

I, [insert name], as [insert title] of [insert name of bus company], certify that a vulnerability assessment has been completed and a security evaluation preparedness plan has been developed or updated for my company within the last three years.

Signature

Date

d. *Ineligible Applicants*

Applicants that do not meet the requirements under “Eligible Applicants” in this NOFO Announcement, and Section 1531 of the 9/11 Act (6 U.S.C. § 1181), are ineligible to apply for FY 2021 IBSGP funds. Specific ineligible service categories include:

- School buses;
- Fixed-service routes under contract to transit authorities within UASI jurisdictions;
- Fixed-service routes not stopping in qualifying UASI jurisdictions;
- Intra-city trolley and/or tour services;
- Bus company owners that are not operators; and

- Intra-city bus service; funding for intra-city bus security is addressed through the Transit Security Grant Program.

Applications will further be considered ineligible for the following reasons:

- An application submitted by an entity that does not meet the eligibility requirements, as described in this NOFO;
- An application submitted by an eligible entity that is deficient in any of the documentary submission requirements, as described in this NOFO;
- An application submitted by an eligible applicant, when the submitter is not a current employee, personnel, official, staff or leadership of the applicant and duly authorized to apply for an award on behalf of the applicant at the time of application; and
- Regardless of an applicant's intent, applications for funding that are deemed "Duplicate Applications" are generally ineligible. As an example, if two applications for the same potential recipient are submitted, both applications will be deemed "Duplicate Applications" and both may be ineligible. However, FEMA retains the discretion to fund one of those duplicate applications based on the criteria set forth in this NOFO.

4. Cost Share or Match

The FY 2021 IBSGP has a cost share requirement.

The only acceptable form of cost sharing is a hard match, meaning cash, by the recipient. In-kind contributions, also known as soft matches, are not acceptable for the recipient's cost share requirement.

Eligible IBSGP applicants shall agree to make available non-federal funds to carry out an IBSGP award in an amount equal to, and not less than, 50 percent of the total project cost as submitted in the application and approved in the award. If the total project cost is ultimately higher than anticipated and submitted at the time of application, the recipient is responsible for all additional costs. If the total project cost is less than the amount anticipated at the time of award, the recipient must ensure that it matches the federal funds expended with an amount equal to, and not less than, 50 percent in non-federal funds. The recipient's contribution should be specifically identified for each proposed project. The non-federal contribution has the same eligibility requirements as the federal share and must be justified as part of the project within the IJ.

For example, if the federal award requires a 50 percent cost share and the total project cost is \$100,000, then:

- Federal share is 50 percent of \$100,000 = \$50,000
- Recipient cost share is 50 percent of \$100,000 = \$50,000

With this example, if the total project cost ends up being \$120,000, the federal share would remain at 50 percent of the original project cost of \$100,000 (i.e., \$50,000). Conversely, if the total project cost ends up being \$80,000, then federal share would be \$40,000 versus \$50,000. In

that case, the recipient would owe FEMA this \$10,000 as the difference between the 50 percent cost share under the original project cost versus the decreased actual project cost.

These cash, hard-match contributions must consist of eligible costs and must be identified as part of the submitted application. A cash match includes cash spent for project related costs. The cost match requirement for the IBSGP award may not be met by funds from another federal grant or assistance program or funds used to meet matching requirements for another federal grant or assistance program, unless otherwise permitted by federal statute. Additionally, normal routine operational costs cannot be used as a cost match unless a completely new capability is being awarded. Please see 2 C.F.R. § 200.306, as applicable, as well as the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#) for additional guidance regarding cost matching.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. Key Dates and Times

- a. *Application Start Date:* **02/25/2021**
- b. *Application Submission Deadline:* **05/14/2021 at 5:00 PM ET**

All applications **must** be received by the established deadline.

The Non-Disaster (ND) Grants System has a date stamp that indicates when an application is submitted. Applicants will receive an electronic message confirming receipt of their submission. For additional information on how an applicant will be notified of application receipt, see the subsection titled “Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission” in Section D of this NOFO.

FEMA will not review applications that are received after the deadline or consider these late applications for funding. FEMA may, however, extend the application deadline on request for any applicant who can demonstrate that good cause exists to justify extending the deadline. Good cause for an extension may include technical problems outside of the applicant’s control that prevent submission of the application by the deadline, other exigent or emergency circumstances, or statutory requirements for FEMA to make an award.

Applicants experiencing technical problems outside of their control must notify FEMA as soon as possible and before the application deadline. Failure to timely notify FEMA of the issue that prevented the timely filing of the application may preclude consideration of the award. “Timely notification” of FEMA means: prior to the application deadline and within 48 hours after the applicant became aware of the issue.

A list of FEMA contacts can be found in Section G of this NOFO, “DHS Awarding Agency Contact Information.” For additional assistance using the Non-Disaster (ND) Grants System, please contact the ND Grants Service Desk at (800) 865-4076 or NDGrants@fema.dhs.gov. The ND Grants Service Desk is available Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM Eastern Time (ET). For programmatic or grants management questions, please contact your Preparedness Officer. If applicants do not know who to contact or if there are programmatic questions or concerns, please contact the Centralized Scheduling and Information Desk

(CSID) by phone at (800) 368-6498 or by e-mail at askcsid@fema.dhs.gov, Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM ET.

- c. **Anticipated Funding Selection Date:** No later than 7/16/2021
- d. **Anticipated Award Date:** No later than 9/30/2021
- e. **Other Key Dates**

Event	Suggested Deadline for Completion
Obtaining DUNS Number	Four weeks before actual submission deadline
Obtaining a valid EIN	Four weeks before actual submission deadline
Creating an account with login.gov	Four weeks before actual submission deadline
Registering in SAM or Updating SAM registration	Four weeks before actual submission deadline
Registering in Grants.gov	Four weeks before actual submission deadline
Starting application in Grants.gov	Three weeks before actual submission deadline
Submitting application in Grants.gov	Two weeks before actual submission deadline
Submitting the final application in the ND Grants System	Three days before actual submission deadline

2. Agreeing to Terms and Conditions of the Award

By submitting an application, applicants agree to comply with the requirements of this NOFO and the terms and conditions of the award, should they receive an award.

3. Address to Request Application Package

See the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#) for requesting and submitting an application.

Initial applications are processed through the [Grants.gov](#) portal. Final applications are completed and submitted through FEMA's ND Grants System. Application forms and instructions are available at Grants.gov. To access these materials, go to <http://www.grants.gov>.

4. Steps Required to Obtain a Unique Entity Identifier, Register in the System for Award Management (SAM), and Submit an Application

Applying for an award under this program is a multi-step process and requires time to complete. Applicants are encouraged to register early as the registration process can take four weeks or more to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required submission deadlines.

Please review the table above for estimated deadlines to complete each of the steps listed. Failure of an applicant to comply with any of the required steps before the deadline for submitting an application may disqualify that application from funding.

To apply for an award under this program, all applicants must:

- a. Apply for, update, or verify their Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet and Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service;
- b. In the application, provide a valid DUNS number, which is currently the unique entity identifier;
- c. Have an account with login.gov;
- d. Register for, update, or verify their SAM account and ensure the account is active before submitting the application;
- e. Create a Grants.gov account;
- f. Add a profile to a Grants.gov account;
- g. Establish an AOR in Grants.gov;
- h. Register in ND Grants
- i. Submit an initial application in Grants.gov;
- j. Submit the final application in ND Grants, including electronically signing applicable forms; and**
- k. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal awarding agency. As part of this, applicants must also provide information on an applicant's immediate and highest-level owner and subsidiaries, as well as on all predecessors that have been awarded federal contracts or federal financial assistance within the last three years, if applicable.

Specific instructions on how to apply for, update, or verify a DUNS number or SAM registration or establish an AOR are included below in the steps for applying through Grants.gov.

Applicants are advised that FEMA may not make a federal award until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements. Therefore, an applicant's SAM registration must be active not only at the time of application, but also during the application review period and when FEMA is ready to make a federal award. Further, as noted above, an applicant's or recipient's SAM registration must remain active for the duration of an active federal award. If an applicant's SAM registration is expired at the time of application, expires during application review, or expires any other time before award, FEMA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

Per 2 C.F.R. § 25.110(c)(2)(ii), if an applicant is experiencing exigent circumstances that prevents it from receiving a DUNS number and completing SAM registration prior to receiving a federal award, the applicant must notify FEMA as soon as possible by contacting askcsid@fema.dhs.gov and providing the details of the circumstances that prevent completion of these requirements. If FEMA determines that there are exigent circumstances and FEMA has decided to make an award, the applicant will be required to obtain a DUNS number and complete SAM registration within 30 days of the federal award date.

5. Electronic Delivery

DHS is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. DHS encourages or requires applicants to submit their applications online through Grants.gov, depending on the funding opportunity.

For this funding opportunity, FEMA requires applicants to submit initial applications through Grants.gov and a final application through ND Grants.

6. How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov

For information on how to register to apply through Grants.gov, please see the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#).

7. How to Submit an Initial Application to FEMA via Grants.gov

Standard Form 424 (SF-424) is the initial application for this NOFO.

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using a workspace. A workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different web forms within an application. For each Notice of Funding Opportunity, you can create individual instances of a workspace. Applicants are encouraged to submit their initial applications in Grants.gov at least seven days before the application deadline.

In Grants.gov, applicants need to submit the following forms:

- SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance
- Grants.gov Lobbying Form, Certification Regarding Lobbying

For further information on how to submit an initial application via Grants.gov, please see the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#).

8. Submitting the Final Application in ND Grants

After submitting the initial application in Grants.gov, eligible applicants will be notified by FEMA and asked to proceed with submitting their complete application package in ND Grants. Applicants can register early with ND Grants and are encouraged to begin their ND Grants registration at the time of this announcement or, at the latest, seven days before the application deadline. Early registration will allow applicants to have adequate time to start and complete their applications. **Note – applicants must update their ND Grants passwords at least once a year.**

Applicants needing assistance registering for the ND Grants system should contact ndgrants@fema.dhs.gov or (800) 865-4076. For step-by-step directions on using the ND Grants system and other guides, please see <https://www.fema.gov/grants/guidance-tools/non-disaster-grants-management-system>.

In ND Grants, applicants will be prompted to submit the standard application information and any program-specific information required as described in Section D.10 of this NOFO, “Content and Form of Application Submission.” The Standard Forms (SF) are auto generated

in ND Grants, but applicants may access these forms in advance through the Forms tab under the [SF-424 family on Grants.gov](#). Applicants should review these forms before applying to ensure they have all the information required.

For additional application submission requirements, including program-specific requirements, please refer to the subsection titled “Content and Form of Application Submission” under Section D of this NOFO.

9. Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

As application submission is a two-step process, the applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application in Grants.gov will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of its initial application. **This notification does not serve as proof of timely submission, as the application is not complete until it is submitted in ND Grants.** Applicants can also view the ND Grants Agency Tracking Number by accessing the Details tab in the submitted workspace section in Grants.gov, under the Agency Tracking Number column. Should the Agency Tracking Number not appear, the application has not yet migrated from Grants.gov into the ND Grants System. Please allow 24 hours for your ND Grants application tracking number to migrate.

All applications must be received in ND Grants by **5:00 PM ET** on the application deadline. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by ND Grants. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by ND Grants. Additionally, the applicant(s) listed as contacts on the application will receive a system-generated email to confirm receipt.

10. Content and Form of Application Submission

a. Standard Required Application Forms and Information

The following forms or information are required to be submitted in either Grants.gov or ND Grants. The Standard Forms (SF) are submitted either through Grants.gov, through forms generated in ND Grants, or as an attachment in ND Grants. Applicants may also access the SFs at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>.

I. GRANTS.GOV

- **SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance**, initial application submitted through Grants.gov
- **Grants.gov Lobbying Form, Certification Regarding Lobbying**, submitted through Grants.gov

II. ND GRANTS

- **SF-424A, Budget Information (Non-Construction)**, submitted via the forms generated by ND Grants
 - **For construction under an award, submit SF-424C, Budget Information (Construction)**, submitted via the forms generated by ND Grants, in addition to or instead of SF-424A

- **SF-424B, Standard Assurances (Non-Construction)**, submitted via the forms generated by ND Grants
 - **For construction under an award, submit SF-424D, Standard Assurances (Construction)**, submitted via the forms generated by ND Grants, in addition to or instead of SF-424B
- **SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities**, submitted via the forms generated by ND Grants
- **Indirect Cost Agreement or Proposal**, submitted as an attachment in ND Grants if the budget includes indirect costs and the applicant is required to have an indirect cost rate agreement or proposal. If the applicant does not have or is not required to have an indirect cost rate agreement or proposal, please see Section D.13 of this NOFO, “Funding Restrictions and Allowable Costs,” for further information regarding allowability of indirect costs and whether alternatives to an indirect cost rate agreement or proposal might be available, or contact the relevant FEMA staff identified in Section G of this NOFO, “DHS Awarding Agency Contact Information” for further instructions.

Generally, applicants have to submit either the non-construction forms (i.e., SF-424A and SF-424B) or construction forms (i.e., SF-424C and SF-424D), meaning that applicants that only have construction work and do not have any non-construction work need only submit the construction forms (i.e., SF-424C and SF-424D) and not the non-construction forms (i.e., SF-424A and SF-424B), and vice versa. However, applicants who have both construction and non-construction work under this program need to submit both the construction and non-construction forms.

b. Program-Specific Required Forms and Information

The following program-specific forms or information are required to be submitted in ND Grants as file attachments:

- IBSGP Application
- Associated IJ
- Associated detailed budget
- VASP certification statement

1. Priority Investments (IBSGP)

- **Cybersecurity**
Cybersecurity investments must support core capabilities as they relate to achieving target capabilities related to preventing, preparing for, protecting against, or responding to acts of terrorism.
- **Soft Targets and Crowded Places**
Soft targets and crowded places are increasingly appealing to terrorists and other extremist actors because of their relative accessibility and the large number of potential targets. This challenge is complicated by the prevalent use of simple tactics and less sophisticated attacks. Segments of our society are inherently open to the general public, and by nature of their purpose do not incorporate strict security measures. Given the increased emphasis by terrorists and other extremist actors to leverage less sophisticated methods to inflict harm in public areas, it is vital that the public and private sectors

collaborate to enhance security of locations such as transportation centers, parks, restaurants, shopping centers, special event venues, and similar facilities. Additional resources and information regarding securing soft targets and crowded places are available through the [Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency](#).

- **Emerging Threats**

The spread of rapidly evolving and innovative technology, equipment, techniques, and knowledge presents new and emerging dangers for homeland security in the years ahead. Terrorists remain intent on acquiring WMD capabilities, and rogue nations and non-state actors are aggressively working to develop, acquire, and modernize WMDs that they could use against the Homeland. Meanwhile, biological and chemical materials and technologies with dual use capabilities are more accessible throughout the global market. Due to the proliferation of such information and technologies, rogue nations and non-state actors have more opportunities to develop, acquire, and use WMDs than ever before. Similarly, the proliferation of unmanned aircraft systems, artificial intelligence, and biotechnology increase opportunities of threat actors to acquire and use these capabilities against the United States and its interests. Additional resources and information regarding emerging threats are available through the [Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office](#) and the [Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency](#).

II. Investment Justification

As part of the FY 2021 IBSGP application process, applicants must develop a single formal IJ that addresses each initiative being proposed for funding, including a project's Management and Administration (M&A) costs. The IJ must demonstrate how proposed projects address gaps and deficiencies (identified in a current vulnerability assessment) in current programs and capabilities, and link to one or more core capabilities identified in the National Preparedness Goal.

The applicant may attach the vulnerability assessment or cite relevant sections/passages within the IJ to demonstrate the linkage between the project request and the identified vulnerability. The IJ should also describe the applicant's current security posture to demonstrate why the proposed project is necessary and appropriate. The IJ must demonstrate the ability to provide enhancements consistent with the purpose of the program and guidance provided by DHS/FEMA.

IBSGP projects must be: 1) both feasible and effective at reducing the risks for which the project was designed, and 2) able to be fully completed within the two-year period of performance. Applicants must ensure that the IJ is consistent with all requirements outlined in this NOFO. Applicants must provide information in the following categories for their single proposed investment:

1. Background
2. Strategic and Program Priorities
3. Impact
4. Funding/Implementation Plan

Applicants must use the following file naming convention when submitting their IJ as part of the FY 2021 IBSGP:

Organization Name_Project Name

III. Detailed Budget

Applicants must provide a detailed budget for the funds requested. The detailed budget must be submitted with the grant application as a file attachment within ND Grants. The budget must be complete, reasonable, and cost-effective in relation to the proposed project. The budget should provide the basis of computation of all project-related costs, any appropriate narrative, and a detailed justification of M&A costs. Applicants receiving funds may not obligate, expend, or draw down funds until budgets and budget narratives have been approved by DHS/FEMA. The budget detail worksheet may be used as a guide to assist applicants in the preparation of budgets and budget narratives. ***Note: Design and Planning/Engineering costs must be clearly identified in a separate line item in order for partial funding to be released prior to Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation (EHP) review and approval.*** Please see the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#) for information on the EHP review process.

Detailed budgets must be submitted with the grant application as a file attachment within ND Grants. Applicants must use the following file naming convention when submitting detailed budgets as part of the IBSGP application process:

Organization Name_Budget Name

IV. Sensitive Security Information (SSI) Requirements

A portion of the information that is routinely submitted in the course of applying for funding, reporting under certain programs, or that is provided in the course of an entity's grant management activities under those programs that are under federal control may be subject to protection under an SSI marking and must be properly identified and marked accordingly. SSI is a control designation used by DHS/FEMA to protect transportation security-related information. It is applied to information about security programs; vulnerability and threat assessments; screening processes; technical specifications of certain screening equipment and objects used to test screening equipment; and equipment used for communicating security information relating to air, land, or maritime transportation. Further information can be found at 49 C.F.R. Part 1520, Protection of Sensitive Security Information.

For the purposes of the IBSGP, and due to the high frequency of SSI found in IBSGP IJs, all IBSGP IJs shall be considered SSI and treated as such until they have been subject to review for SSI by DHS/FEMA. Therefore, applicants shall label all application documents as SSI in accordance with 49 C.F.R. § 1520.13.

11. Intergovernmental Review

An intergovernmental review may be required. Applicants must contact their state's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to comply with the state's process under Executive Order 12372

(See <https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-order/12372.html>; <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SPOC-4-13-20.pdf>).

12. Funding Restrictions and Allowable Costs

All costs charged to awards covered by this NOFO must comply with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, unless otherwise indicated in the NOFO, the terms and conditions of the award, or the Preparedness Grants Manual. This includes, among other requirements, that costs must be incurred, and products and services must be delivered, within the period of performance of the award. See 2 C.F.R. § 200.403(h) (referring to budget periods, which for FEMA awards is the same under this program as the period of performance).

Federal funds made available through this award may be used for the purpose set forth in this NOFO, the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#), and the terms and conditions of the award and must be consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Award funds may not be used for matching funds for any other federal awards, lobbying, or intervention in federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. In addition, federal funds may not be used to sue the Federal Government or any other government entity. See the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#) for more information on funding restrictions and allowable costs.

a. *Prohibitions on Expending FEMA Award Funds for Covered Telecommunications Equipment or Services*

Recipients and subrecipients of FEMA federal financial assistance are subject to the prohibitions described in section 889 of the [John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 \(FY 2019 NDAA\)](#), Pub. L. No. 115-232 (2018) and 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.216, 200.326, 200.471, and Appendix II to 2 C.F.R. Part 200. Beginning August 13, 2020, the statute – as it applies to FEMA recipients, subrecipients, and their contractors and subcontractors – prohibits obligating or expending federal award funds on certain telecommunications and video surveillance products and contracting with certain entities for national security reasons.

Additional guidance is available in FEMA Policy #405-143-1 [Prohibitions on Expending FEMA Award Funds for Covered Telecommunications Equipment or Services \(Interim\)](#).

Effective August 13, 2020, FEMA recipients and subrecipients **may not** use any FEMA funds under open or new awards to:

- (1) Procure or obtain any equipment, system, or service that uses covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology of any system;
- (2) Enter into, extend, or renew a contract to procure or obtain any equipment, system, or service that uses covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology of any system; or

- (3) Enter into, extend, or renew contracts with entities that use covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology as part of any system.

I. REPLACEMENT EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES

FEMA grant funding may be permitted to procure replacement equipment and services impacted by this prohibition, provided the costs are otherwise consistent with the requirements of the NOFO and the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#).

II. DEFINITIONS

Per section 889(f)(2)-(3) of the FY 2019 NDAA and 2 C.F.R. § 200.216, covered telecommunications equipment or services means:

- i. Telecommunications equipment produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation, (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities);
- ii. For the purpose of public safety, security of Government facilities, physical security surveillance of critical infrastructure, and other national security purposes, video surveillance and telecommunications equipment produced by Hytera Communications Corporation, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, or Dahua Technology Company (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities);
- iii. Telecommunications or video surveillance services provided by such entities or using such equipment; or
- iv. Telecommunications or video surveillance equipment or services produced or provided by an entity that the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence or the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, reasonably believes to be an entity owned or controlled by, or otherwise connected to, the People's Republic of China.

Examples of the types of products covered by this prohibition include phones, internet, video surveillance, and cloud servers when produced, provided, or used by the entities listed in the definition of "covered telecommunications equipment or services." *See* 2 C.F.R. § 200.471.

b. *Pre-Award Costs*

Pre-award costs are not allowable and will not be approved, with the exception of costs resulting from pre-award grant writing services provided by an independent contractor that shall not exceed \$1,500 per applicant per year.

c. *Management and Administration (M&A) Costs*

M&A costs are allowed. Recipients may use up to 5 percent of the amount of the award for their M&A. M&A activities are those defined as directly relating to the management and administration of IBSGP funds, such as financial management and monitoring. M&A expenses must be based on actual expenses or known contractual costs. Requests that are simple percentages of the award, without supporting justification, will not be allowed or considered for reimbursement.

M&A costs are not operational costs. They are the necessary costs incurred in direct support of the grant or as a consequence of the grant and should be allocated across the entire lifecycle of the grant. Examples include preparing and submitting required programmatic and financial reports, establishing and/or maintaining equipment inventory, documenting operational and equipment expenditures for financial accounting purposes; and responding to official informational requests from state and federal oversight authorities. If an applicant uses an outside consultant or contractor to provide pre-award grant writing services or post-award grant management services, additional considerations and restrictions shall apply as detailed in subsection(e) below.

d. *Indirect Facilities & Administrative (F&A) Costs*

Indirect costs are allowable under this program as described in 2 C.F.R. Part 200, including 2 C.F.R. § 200.414. Applicants with a current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement that desire to charge indirect costs to an award must provide a copy of their negotiated indirect cost rate agreement at the time of application. Not all applicants are required to have a current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement. Applicants that are not required by 2 C.F.R. Part 200 to have a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement but are required by 2 C.F.R. Part 200 to develop an indirect cost rate proposal must provide a copy of their proposal at the time of application. Applicants who do not have a current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (including a provisional rate) and wish to charge the de minimis rate must reach out to the FEMA Grants Management Specialist for further instructions. Applicants who wish to use a cost allocation plan in lieu of an indirect cost rate must also reach out to the FEMA Grants Management Specialist for further instructions. Post-award requests to charge indirect costs will be considered on a case-by-case basis and based upon the submission of an agreement or proposal as discussed above or based upon on the de minimis rate or cost allocation plan, as applicable.

e. *Other Direct Costs*

Costs generally need to fit within one of the categories listed below to be allowable under this program. Please reference the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#) for more information on allowable costs. Applicants who have questions about whether a potential cost is allowable or not under this program should contact their Preparedness Officer.

I. CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION

Construction and renovation costs for modifying terminals, garages, and facilities, including terminals and other over-the-road bus facilities owned by state or local governments, to enhance their security are allowed under this program. For more information, please reference the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#).

II. OPERATIONAL OVERTIME

Operational overtime costs are allowed under this program. For more information, please reference the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#).

III. TRAVEL

Domestic travel costs are allowed under this program only as described in this NOFO and the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#). International travel is not an allowable cost under IBSGP.

IV. MAINTENANCE AND SUSTAINMENT

Maintenance- and sustainment-related costs, such as maintenance contracts, warranties, repair or replacement costs, upgrades, and user fees are allowable. For more information, please reference the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#).

V. AUTHORIZED USE OF CONTRACTUAL GRANT WRITERS AND/OR GRANT MANAGERS

A grant applicant may procure the services of a contractor to provide support and assistance for pre-award grant development services (grant writing) or post-award grant management and administrative services (grant management). As with all federal grant-funded procurements, grant writer or grant management services must be procured in accordance with the federal procurement standards at 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.317 – 200.327. See the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#) section regarding procurement integrity, particularly the sections applicable to non-state entities that discuss organizational conflicts of interest under 2 C.F.R. § 200.319(b) and traditional conflicts of interest under 2 C.F.R. § 200.318(c)(1). States must follow the same policies and procedures it uses for procurements of its non-federal funds, pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.317, which also applies 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.321, 200.322, 200.323, and 200.327.

As applicable to non-state entities, DHS/FEMA considers a contracted grant writer to be an agent of the recipient for any subsequent contracts the recipient procures under the same federal award in which the grant writer provided grant writing services. Federal funds and funds applied to the award's cost share generally cannot be used to pay a contractor to carry out the work if that contractor also worked on the development of such specifications.

As applicable to all non-federal entities, regardless of whether an applicant or recipient uses grant writing and/or grant management services, the recipient is solely responsible for the fiscal and programmatic integrity of the grant and its authorized activities and expenditures. The recipient must ensure adequate internal controls, including separation of duties, to safeguard grant assets, processes, and documentation, in keeping with the terms and conditions of its award, including this NOFO, and 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

Consultants or contractors are not permitted to be the AOR of the recipient. Further, an application must be officially submitted by 1) a ***current employee, personnel, official, staff, or leadership*** of the non-federal entity; and 2) ***duly authorized to apply*** for an award on behalf of the non-federal entity at the time of application.

1. Grant Writers

Grant writing contractors may assist the applicant in preparing, writing, and finalizing grant application materials and assisting the applicant with handling online application and submission requirements in Grants.gov and ND Grants. Grant writers may assist in a variety of ways. Ultimately, however, the applicant that receives an award is solely responsible for all grant award and administrative responsibilities.

By submitting the application, applicants certify that all of the information contained therein is true and an accurate reflection of the organization, and that regardless of the

applicant's intent, the submission of information that is false or misleading may result in actions by DHS/FEMA. These actions include, but are not limited to, the submitted application not being considered for award, temporary withholding of funding under the existing award pending investigation, or referral to the DHS Office of the Inspector General.

To assist applicants with the cost of grant writing services, DHS/FEMA is permitting a one-time pre-award cost of no more than \$1,500 per applicant per year for contractual grant writing services as part of the recipient's M&A costs. This is only intended to cover costs associated with a grant writer and may not be used to reimburse the applicant for their own time and effort in the development of a grant application. Additionally, the applicant may be required to pay this fee with its own funds during the application preparation and submission period; if the applicant subsequently receives an award, the applicant may then request to be reimbursed once grant funds become available for that cost, not to exceed \$1,500. If the applicant does not receive an award, this cost will not be reimbursed by the Federal Government. The applicant must understand this risk and be able to cover this cost if an award is not made.

If an applicant intends to request reimbursement for this one-time pre-award cost, it must include this request in its application materials, including in the Budget Detail Worksheet for the IJ. Failure to clearly identify this as a separate cost in the application may result in its disallowance. This is the only pre-award cost eligible for reimbursement. Recipients must maintain grant writer fee documentation including, but not limited to: a copy of the solicitation, such as a quote request, rate request, invitation to bid, or request for proposals, if applicable; a copy of the grant writer's contract agreement; a copy of the invoice or purchase order; and a copy of the canceled check or proof of payment. These records must be made available to DHS/FEMA upon request.

Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. Part 180, recipients may not use federal grant funds to reimburse any entity, including a grant writer or preparer, if that entity is presently suspended or debarred by the Federal Government from receiving funding under federally funded grants or contracts. Recipients must verify that the contractor is not suspended or debarred from participating in specified federal procurement or non-procurement transactions pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 180.300. FEMA recommends recipients use SAM.gov to conduct this verification.

Furthermore, regardless of whether any grant writer fees were requested, unless a single contract covering both pre- and post-award services was awarded to the grant writer and procured in compliance with 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.317 – 200.327, federal funds and funds applied to the award's cost share cannot be used to pay the grant writer to provide post-award services.

Consultants or contractors are not permitted to be the AOR of the recipient. Further, an application must be officially submitted by 1) a ***current employee, personnel, official, staff, or leadership*** of the non-federal entity; and 2) ***duly authorized to apply*** for an award on behalf of the non-federal entity at the time of application.

2. **Grant Managers**

Grant management contractors provide support in the day-to-day management of an active grant and their services may be incurred as M&A costs of the award. Additionally, recipients may retain grant management contractors at their own expense.

Consultants or contractors are not permitted to be the AOR of the recipient. The AOR, or Authorized Official, is responsible for submitting programmatic and financial performance reports, accepting award packages, signing assurances and certifications, and submitting award amendments.

3. **Restrictions Regarding Grant Writers and Grant Managers**

Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. Part 180, recipients may not use federal grant funds to reimburse any entity, including a grant writer or preparer, if that entity is presently suspended or debarred by the Federal Government from receiving funding under federally funded grants or contracts. Recipients must verify that a contractor is not suspended or debarred from participating in specified federal procurement or non-procurement transactions pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 180.300. FEMA recommends recipients use SAM.gov to conduct this verification. Further, regardless of whether any grant writer fees were requested, as applicable to non-state entities, unless a single contract covering both pre- and post-award services was awarded to the grant writer and procured in compliance with 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.317 – 200.327, federal funds cannot be used to pay the grant writer to provide post-award services.

f. **Excess Funds**

After completing the initial project proposed in the recipient's application, some recipients may have unexpended funds remaining in their budgets. These excess funds may result from any combination of under-budget acquisition activities or competitive procurement processes. In such cases, excess funds must be returned to FEMA upon project completion. Please also see Section C.4 of this NOFO regarding cost share requirements, including the implications if the project costs are less than what was applied for.

E. Application Review Information

1. Application Evaluation Criteria

a. Programmatic Criteria

FY 2021 IBSGP applications will be evaluated through a review process for completeness, adherence to programmatic guidelines, and anticipated effectiveness of the proposed investments. Applicants can score a maximum of 100 points in this evaluation process. Applications requesting funds will be reviewed and selected based on the following criteria:

- Scope of work (purpose and objectives of the project, identification of what is being protected)
- Desired outcomes, including expected long-term impact where applicable
- Summary of status of planning and design accomplished to date (e.g. included in a capital improvement plan)
- Project schedule

- I. **Funding Guidelines.** The IJ should provide details on specific needs to be addressed, vision, goals, and objectives. It should also provide evidence of how the project fits into an overall effort to meet critical infrastructure security requirements, and how the investment provides a significant security impact.
Possible Review Panel Funding Guidelines Score: 0-20 points
- II. **Cost effectiveness.** Projects will be evaluated and prioritized based on the expected impact on security relative to the investment. The IJ should provide quantitative evidence of the security impact, as well as justification for the strategic use of the proposed budget. The project cost levels should be commensurate with the security impact, and the proposed solution should be reasonable and advantageous over other possible solutions.
Possible Review Panel Cost Effectiveness Score: 0-15 points
- III. **Ability to reduce risk of catastrophic events.** Projects will be evaluated and prioritized based on their ability to reduce risk. The IJ should demonstrate an ability to reduce risk, providing quantitative evidence of the project's security impact, potential consequences of not funding the project, and a strategy to address specific risk areas. The IJ should also reflect robust regional coordination and an investment strategy that institutionalizes regional security strategy integration in the Nation's highest risk metropolitan areas.
Possible Review Panel Risk Reduction Score: 0-35 points
- IV. **Sustainability without additional federal funds and leveraging of other funding.** Projects will be evaluated and prioritized regarding the extent to which they exhibit a likelihood of success, or continued success, without requiring additional federal assistance.
Possible Review Panel Sustainability Score: 0-10 points
- V. **Timelines.** Projects will be evaluated and prioritized on the ability of the applicant to complete the proposed project within submitted timelines. The IJ should provide a timeline and demonstrate evidence of ability to complete the project within the submitted timeline based on proposed strategy, identified implementation challenges, management and resource plan, and reasonableness of anticipated schedule.
Possible Review Panel Timelines Score: 0-10 points
- VI. **Risk to critical infrastructure.** The FY 2021 IBSGP will use risk-based prioritization consistent with DHS policy. This score is calculated using a risk process developed and maintained by TSA and provided separately in accordance with proper SSI handling protocol. Scores from TSA are informed by their risk methodology ranking, the relative risk of high-risk UASI jurisdictions, and giving higher priority to those applicants with routes passing through underwater tunnels.
Possible Review Panel Critical Infrastructure Score: 0-10 points
- VII. **National Priority Areas.** Projects that sufficiently address one or more of the three National Priority Areas (enhancing cybersecurity; enhancing the protection of soft targets/crowded places; or addressing emerging threats) will have their final scores increased by a multiplier of 20 percent.
Possible Review Panel National Priorities Score: Increase by a multiplier of 20 percent

b. *Financial Integrity Criteria*

Prior to making a federal award, FEMA is required by 31 U.S.C. § 3354, as amended by the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019, Pub. L. No. 116-117 (2020); 41 U.S.C. § 2313; and 2 C.F.R. § 200.206 to review information available through any Office of Management and Budget (OMB)-designated repositories of governmentwide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, including whether the applicant is suspended or debarred. FEMA may also pose additional questions to the applicant to aid in conducting the pre-award risk review. Therefore, application evaluation criteria may include the following risk-based considerations of the applicant:

- i. Financial stability.
- ii. Quality of management systems and ability to meet management standards.
- iii. History of performance in managing federal award.
- iv. Reports and findings from audits.
- v. Ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

c. *Supplemental Financial Integrity Criteria and Review*

Prior to making a federal award where the anticipated total federal share will be greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, currently \$250,000:

- i. FEMA is required to review and consider any information about the applicant, including information on the applicant's immediate and highest-level owner, subsidiaries, and predecessors, if applicable, that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through the System for Award Management (SAM), which is currently the [Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System](#) (FAPIIS).
- ii. An applicant, at its option, may review information in FAPIIS and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency previously entered.
- iii. FEMA will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.206.

2. *Review and Selection Process*

Recipients must comply with all administrative requirements described herein—including the submission of the IJ, budget, and other application materials as required. Having met all administrative requirements, the application will be scored based on a methodology that will ensure consistent and accurate evaluations of projects and proposals. The following process will be used to make awards for the program:

- DHS/FEMA will verify compliance with each of the administrative and eligibility criteria identified in the NOFO.

- Eligible applications will be reviewed and scored by the National Review Panel (NRP). Each panelist will independently review each application and score it based on the above criteria using a standard scoring sheet.
- The NRP will meet to review and compare scores and discuss project criteria. Each panelist will then confirm their final scores. Panelist scores will be averaged to obtain scores for each criterion on each project.
- DHS/FEMA will calculate a total score for each project. The total score will consist of the sum of the Funding Guidelines score (0-20), Cost Effectiveness score (0-15), Risk Reduction score (0-35), Sustainability score (0-10), Timeline score (0-10), and Risk to Critical Infrastructure score calculated by TSA (0-10). *As stated above, proposed projects that sufficiently address one or more of the National Priorities will receive an additional twenty (20) percent score increase.*
- The NRP results, scoring summary, and funding recommendations will be compiled and reviewed for approval by the Secretary of Homeland Security, who has final funding discretion.

DHS/FEMA may conduct additional pre-award vetting of proposed recipients, to include:

- 1) Whether any of the bus companies have been declared an “imminent hazard” or fined by either the federal or any state department of transportation, and
- 2) Whether any of the bus company owner/operators have been convicted of human trafficking or criminally transporting illegal immigrants on buses.

DHS/FEMA HQ Grants Management Specialists will conduct financial review using the following criteria:

- Allowability, allocability, and financial reasonableness of the proposed budget and investment information, and
- Whether a recipient meets the financial and legal requirements listed in 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

1. Notice of Award

Before accepting the award, the AOR and recipient should carefully read the award package. The award package includes instructions on administering the grant award and the terms and conditions associated with responsibilities under federal awards. **Recipients must accept all conditions in this NOFO and the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#) as well as any specific terms and conditions in the Notice of Award to receive an award under this program.**

See the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#) for information on Notice of Award.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

In addition to the requirements of in this section and in this NOFO, FEMA may place specific terms and conditions on individual awards in accordance with 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

In addition to the information regarding DHS Standard Terms and Conditions and Ensuring the Protection of Civil Rights, see the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#) for additional information on administrative and national policy requirements, including the following:

- EHP Compliance
- FirstNet
- NIMS Implementation
- SAFECOM

a. *DHS Standard Terms and Conditions*

All successful applicants for DHS grant and cooperative agreements are required to comply with DHS Standard Terms and Conditions, which are available online at: [DHS Standard Terms and Conditions](#).

The applicable DHS Standard Terms and Conditions will be those in effect at the time the award was made. What terms and conditions will apply for the award will be clearly stated in the award package at the time of award.

b. *Ensuring the Protection of Civil Rights*

As the Nation works towards achieving the [National Preparedness Goal](#), it is important to continue to protect the civil rights of individuals. Recipients and subrecipients must carry out their programs and activities, including those related to the building, sustainment, and delivery of core capabilities, in a manner that respects and ensures the protection of civil rights for protected populations.

Federal civil rights statutes, such as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, along with DHS and FEMA regulations, prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, limited English proficiency, or economic status in connection with programs and activities receiving [federal financial assistance](#) from FEMA.

The DHS Standard Terms and Conditions include a fuller list of the civil rights provisions that apply to recipients. These terms and conditions can be found in the [DHS Standard Terms and Conditions](#). Additional information on civil rights provisions is available at <https://www.fema.gov/office-equal-rights>.

Monitoring and oversight requirements in connection with recipient compliance with federal civil rights laws are also authorized pursuant to 44 C.F.R. Part 7.

c. *EHP Compliance*

As a federal agency, FEMA is required to consider the effects of its actions on the environment and historic properties to ensure that all activities and programs funded by FEMA, including grant-funded projects, comply with federal EHP laws, Executive Orders, regulations, and policies, as applicable.

Recipients and subrecipients proposing projects that have the potential to impact the environment, including, but not limited to, the construction of communication towers,

modification or renovation of existing buildings, structures, and facilities, or new construction including replacement of facilities, must participate in the FEMA EHP review process. The EHP review process involves the submission of a detailed project description along with any supporting documentation requested by FEMA in order to determine whether the proposed project has the potential to impact environmental resources or historic properties.

In some cases, FEMA is also required to consult with other regulatory agencies and the public in order to complete the review process. Federal law requires EHP review to be completed before federal funds are released to carry out proposed projects. FEMA may not be able to fund projects that are not in compliance with applicable EHP laws, Executive Orders, regulations, and policies.

DHS and FEMA EHP policy is found in directives and instructions available on the [FEMA.gov EHP page](#), the FEMA website page that includes documents regarding EHP responsibilities and program requirements, including implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act and other EHP regulations and Executive Orders.

The GPD EHP screening form is located at <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/90195>. Additionally, all recipients under this funding opportunity are required to comply with the FEMA GPD EHP Policy Guidance, FEMA Policy #108-023-1, available at <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/85376>.

3. Reporting

Recipients are required to submit various financial and programmatic reports as a condition of award acceptance. Future awards and funds drawdown may be withheld if these reports are delinquent.

See the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#) for information on reporting requirements.

4. Monitoring and Oversight

Per 2 C.F.R. § 200.337, FEMA, through its authorized representatives, has the right, at all reasonable times, to make site visits or conduct desk reviews to review project accomplishments and management control systems to review award progress and to provide any required technical assistance. During site visits or desk reviews, FEMA will review recipients' files related to the award. As part of any monitoring and program evaluation activities, recipients must permit FEMA, upon reasonable notice, to review grant-related records and to interview the organization's staff and contractors regarding the program. Recipients must respond in a timely and accurate manner to FEMA requests for information relating to the award.

See the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#) for information on monitoring and oversight.

G. DHS Awarding Agency Contact Information

1. Contact and Resource Information

a. *Program Office Contact*

FEMA has assigned region-specific Preparedness Officers for the IBSGP. If you do not know your Preparedness Officer, please contact CSID by phone at (800) 368-6498 or by email at askcsid@fema.dhs.gov, Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM ET.

b. *Centralized Scheduling and Information Desk (CSID)*

CSID is a non-emergency comprehensive management and information resource developed by FEMA for grants stakeholders. CSID provides general information on all FEMA grant programs and maintains a comprehensive database containing key personnel contact information at the federal, state, and local levels. When necessary, recipients will be directed to a federal point of contact who can answer specific programmatic questions or concerns. CSID can be reached by phone at (800) 368-6498 or by e-mail at askcsid@fema.dhs.gov, Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM ET.

c. *GPD Award Administration Division*

GPD's Award Administration Division (AAD) provides support regarding financial matters and budgetary technical assistance. Additional guidance and information can be obtained by contacting the AAD's Help Desk via e-mail at ASK-GMD@fema.dhs.gov.

d. *Equal Rights*

The FEMA Office of Equal Rights (OER) is responsible for compliance with and enforcement of federal civil rights obligations in connection with programs and services conducted by FEMA and recipients of FEMA financial assistance. All inquiries and communications about federal civil rights compliance for FEMA grants under this NOFO should be sent to FEMA-CivilRightsOffice@fema.dhs.gov.

e. *Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation*

GPD's EHP Team provides guidance and information about the EHP review process to recipients and subrecipients. All inquiries and communications about GPD projects under this NOFO or the EHP review process, including the submittal of EHP review materials, should be sent to gpdehpinfo@fema.dhs.gov.

2. Systems Information

a. *Grants.gov*

For technical assistance with [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), call the customer support hotline 24 hours per day, 7 days per week (except federal holidays) at (800) 518-4726 or e-mail at support@grants.gov.

b. *Non-Disaster (ND) Grants*

For technical assistance with the ND Grants system, please contact the ND Grants Helpdesk at ndgrants@fema.gov or (800) 865-4076, Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM ET. User resources are available at <https://www.fema.gov/grants/guidance-tools/non-disaster-grants-management-system>

c. *Payment and Reporting System (PARS)*

FEMA uses the [Payment and Reporting System \(PARS\)](#) for financial reporting, invoicing, and tracking payments. FEMA uses the Direct Deposit/Electronic Funds Transfer (DD/EFT)

method of payment to recipients. To enroll in the DD/EFT, recipients must complete a Standard Form 1199A, Direct Deposit Form. If you have questions about the online system, please call the Customer Service Center at (866) 927-5646 or email ask-GMD@fema.dhs.gov.

H. Additional Information

GPD has developed the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#) to guide applicants and recipients of grant funding on how to manage their grants and other resources. Recipients seeking guidance on policies and procedures for managing preparedness grants should reference the Preparedness Grants Manual for further information. Examples of information contained in the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#) include:

- Actions to Address Noncompliance
- Audits
- Case Studies and Use of Grant-Funded Resources During Real-World Incident Operations
- Community Lifelines
- Conflicts of Interest in the Administration of Federal Awards and Subawards
- Disability Integration
- National Incident Management System
- Payment Information
- Period of Performance Extensions
- Procurement Integrity
- Record Retention
- Whole Community Preparedness
- Other Post-Award Requirements

1. Termination Provisions

FEMA may terminate a federal award in whole or in part for one of the following reasons. FEMA and the recipient must still comply with closeout requirements at 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.344-200.345 even if an award is terminated in whole or in part. To the extent that subawards are permitted under this NOFO, pass-through entities should refer to 2 C.F.R. § 200.340 for additional information on termination regarding subawards.

a. *Noncompliance*

If a recipient fails to comply with the terms and conditions of a federal award, FEMA may terminate the award in whole or in part. If the noncompliance can be corrected, FEMA may first attempt to direct the recipient to correct the noncompliance. This may take the form of a Compliance Notification. If the noncompliance cannot be corrected or the recipient is non-responsive, FEMA may proceed with a Remedy Notification, which could impose a remedy for noncompliance per 2 C.F.R. § 200.339, including termination. Any action to terminate based on noncompliance will follow the requirements of 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.341-200.342 as well as the requirement of 2 C.F.R. § 200.340(c) to report in FAPIIS the recipient's material failure to comply with the award terms and conditions. See also the section on Actions to Address Noncompliance in the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#).

b. *With the Consent of the Recipient*

FEMA may also terminate an award in whole or in part with the consent of the recipient, in which case the parties must agree upon the termination conditions, including the effective date, and in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated.

c. *Notification by the Recipient*

The recipient may terminate the award, in whole or in part, by sending written notification to FEMA setting forth the reasons for such termination, the effective date, and in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated. In the case of partial termination, FEMA may determine that a partially terminated award will not accomplish the purpose of the federal award, so FEMA may terminate the award in its entirety. If that occurs, FEMA will follow the requirements of 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.341-200.342 in deciding to fully terminate the award.

2. *Period of Performance Extensions*

Extensions to the period of performance (POP) for this program are allowed. Extensions to the POP identified in the award will only be considered through formal, written requests to the recipient's FEMA Preparedness Officer and must contain specific and compelling justifications as to why an extension is required. Recipients are advised to coordinate with the FEMA Preparedness Officer as needed when preparing an extension request. Please refer to the [Preparedness Grants Manual](#) for more detail on the requirements for submitting a POP extension request.