



Small Community Air Service Development Program (SCASDP)

Agency Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)
Program Description The SCASDP program provides financial assistance to small communities, on a competitive basis, to help them enhance their air service. The program seeks to improve air service to underserved communities, including connectivity to the national air transportation system. Grant monies are disbursed to grantees on a reimbursable basis. Authorized under 49 U.S.C. § 41743 and most recently reauthorized by the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 (Pub. L. No. 118-63). Docket: DOT-OST-2025-2316.

Application Due May 4, 2026 (4:00 PM EDT)

Total Funding \$12 million

Award Amount NA

Local Match: Not required. However, applications with local cash contributions (State and/or local) are viewed more favorably. Reimbursement is on a proportionate basis.

Eligible Applicants Only public entities may apply for and serve as the legal sponsor of a grant under the Small Community Program. Private organizations cannot be the lead applicant. A community may file only one application for a grant, either individually or as part of a consortium.

Consortium Applications: Both individual communities and consortia of communities are eligible for SCASDP funds. An application from a consortium of communities must be one that seeks to facilitate the efforts of the communities working together toward one joint grant project, with one joint objective, including the establishment of one entity to ensure that the joint objective is accomplished.

Communities Without Existing Air Service: Communities that do not currently have commercial air service are eligible for SCASDP funds.

Eligibility Limitations:

- Hub Size: In order to satisfy the hub-size requirement set forth in 49 U.S.C. §41743(c)(1)(A), the airport serving the community or consortium may not be larger than a small-hub airport, as determined using the FAA’s most recently published classification effective on the Department’s set application deadline (due date).
Same Project Limitation: Under 49 U.S.C. § 41743(c)(4)(B), as amended by FAA 2024, a community or consortium may not receive a new grant to support the same project more than once in a five-year period from the date of execution of the previous/original grant.

Eligible Activities/Projects The Department is authorized to award grants under 49 U.S.C. § 41743(d) to communities that seek to provide assistance to:

- A U.S. air carrier to subsidize service to and from an underserved airport for a period not to exceed 3 years;
An underserved airport, or an airport where air service has been terminated or substantially reduced, to obtain service to and from the underserved airport; and/or
An underserved airport to implement such other measures as the Secretary, in consultation with such airport, considers appropriate to improve air service both in terms of the cost of such service to consumers and the availability of such service, including improving air service through marketing and promotion of air service and enhanced utilization of airport facilities.

NOTE: Airport capital improvement projects and EAS communities are NOT eligible.

Review Criteria Eligibility Review: hub-size (no larger than small-hub), concurrent grant limitation, same-project limitation (5-year), EAS exclusion, public entity sponsor. Technical Review Merit Criteria (49 U.S.C. § 41743(c)(5)):

- (1) air fares above national average;
(2) air carrier letter of intent for new/expanded service;
(3) local non-airport cash contributions;
(4) public-private partnership;
(5) restoration of terminated/substantially reduced service;
(6) material benefit to broad traveling public;
(7) timely use of funds with clear strategic plan;
(8) regional/multistate consortium.

Selection also considers: community participation, geographic location, Families First alignment, existing service trends, sustainability plan, and geographic distribution of awards.

Link: https://www.transportation.gov/policy/aviation-policy/small-community-rural-air-service/SCASDP

Application Submission Must register with SAM (sam.gov) and obtain a valid UEI before submitting (registration takes 2-4 weeks). Contact: Brooke.Chapman@dot.gov or (202) 366-0577. Late applications: SCASDPgrants@dot.gov.

BAC Partnership Opportunity The Build America Center (BAC) is a technical assistance program funded by the USDOT, offering grant development services to localities at NO CHARGE. For more information, please visit our websites: https://bac.umd.edu/ and https://billaunchpad.com/

If your agency is interested in exploring this opportunity, contact us at bac@umd.edu for details on collaboration