



July 31, 2026

FY 2026 Bus Safety, Accessibility, and Innovation Research Program

Agency	U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Office of Research, Demonstration, and Innovation
Program Description	The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announces the opportunity to apply for competitive awards totaling up to \$10 million in Public Transportation Innovation Program (49 U.S.C. § 5312) funds for the FY 2026 Bus Safety, Accessibility, and Innovation Research Program under Assistance Listing Number 20.530. FTA anticipates funding up to two awards from the available funding. The program supports FTA's goal of enhancing the safety of transit fleets by addressing critical safety and accessibility issues in public transit buses, including rising operator assaults, the need to increase operator visibility and minimize blind spots, and continued accessibility issues for people with disabilities in and around transit buses. The goals are to develop innovative concepts and to prototype technical implementations to make existing and new buses safer for their operators, passengers, and vulnerable road users, and more accessible for their passengers. Key focus areas are bus design and technology upgrades that address Driver Safety, Passenger Safety, VRU (vulnerable road user) Safety, and Passenger Accessibility. This is a new program; although FTA published a similarly named NOFO on November 18, 2024, it made no selections or awards under it, and this NOFO has different requirements and criteria. Grant Type: Competitive (cooperative agreement).
Application Due	11:59 p.m. Eastern time on September 28, 2026
Total Funding	Up to \$10 million (FY 2026)
Award Amount	2
Local Match:	Yes. 80%
Eligible Applicants	Transit Vehicle Manufacturers (TVMs) and transit vehicle component manufacturers; departments, agencies, and instrumentalities of the Government, including Federal laboratories; providers of public transportation, including public transportation agencies, State or local government DOTs, and federally recognized Indian tribes; private for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, or consultants; State, city, or local government entities, including multi-jurisdictional partnerships, and organizations such as Metropolitan Planning Organizations; and other organizations, including research consortia, not-for-profit industry organizations, and institutions of higher education, including large research universities, and technical and community colleges. Additional requirements: applicants must have sufficient legal, financial, and technical capabilities to receive and administer Federal funds under this program, and teams must include a TVM in a prominent role.
Eligible Activities/Projects	Research on bus designs, innovations, and technologies to improve: transit bus operator safety and security; transit bus passenger safety and security; safety of vulnerable road users near transit buses; and accessibility of transit buses for users with physical and cognitive disabilities; plus production of a prototype that can be retrofitted on existing buses or installed in new buses. The program's key focus areas are bus design and technology upgrades that address Driver Safety, Passenger Safety, VRU Safety, and Passenger Accessibility. FTA seeks projects that can begin implementation within 2 months of award; the maximum period of performance should not exceed 3 years from the date of award.
Review Criteria	FTA will evaluate applications using seven criteria: (1) Demonstration of Transit Vehicle Design Experience; (2) Demonstration of Understanding in Emerging Transit Needs and Solutions; (3) Key Personnel Experience and Organizational Capacity; (4) Program Implementation Strategy; (5) Technical, Legal, and Financial Capacity; (6) Planning and Partnerships; and (7) Financial Commitment. Applications are rated based on the Supplemental Form and narrative proposal. An evaluation committee rates each application as Highly Recommended, Recommended, or Not Recommended; after considering the committee's findings, the FTA Administrator determines the final selection and amount of funding for each project. The Administrator may also consider geographic areas; size of the transit systems funded; whether the applicant is from an urban, small urban, or rural area or is a Tribal government; and prior receipt and management of Federal transit funds, and intends to apply principles from DOT Orders 2100.7 and 2100.9.
Link:	https://www.transit.dot.gov/notices-funding/fy-2026-notice-funding-opportunity-bus-safety-accessibility-and-innovation-research https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/363372
Application Submission	Submit electronically through Grants.gov (Funding Opportunity ID: FTA-2026-004-TRI) A complete submission includes the SF-424, the Supplemental Form, and a narrative proposal (not to exceed 25 pages), attached to the SF-424 "Attachments" section; total file size should be less than 200 MB. Applicants must be registered in SAM.gov with a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and maintain active registration. Mail, email, and fax submissions will not be accepted. For Grants.gov issues, contact 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.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://billlaunchpad.com/
<i>If your agency is interested in exploring this opportunity, contact us at bac@umd.edu for details on collaboration</i>	