

Florida Commission for the



**Transportation  
Disadvantaged**

FISCAL YEAR 2021-22  
PROGRAM MANUAL AND APPLICATION  
FOR THE  
INNOVATIVE SERVICE DEVELOPMENT GRANT

Issued By:

FLORIDA COMMISSION FOR THE TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED

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# INTRODUCTION

The Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund is administered by the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD), pursuant to Section 427.0159, Florida Statutes (F.S.). The purpose of the Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund is to provide a dedicated funding source for the operational and planning expenses of the Commission in carrying out its legislative responsibilities.

The 2019 Florida Legislature created the Multi-Use Corridors of Regional Economic Significance (M-CORES) program, which provided approximately \$10 million in additional funding to the Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund to administer the Innovative Service Development Grant Program.

The legislation (s. 338.2278(8)(e), F.S.) directs the Commission to award this funding through competitive grants to eligible recipients for the purposes of providing cost-effective, door-to-door, on-demand and scheduled transportation services that meet at least one of the following objectives:

1. Increase a transportation disadvantaged person's access to and departure from job training, employment, health care, and other life-sustaining services;
2. Enhance regional connectivity and cross-county mobility; or,
3. Reduce the difficulty in connecting transportation disadvantaged persons to a transportation hub and from the hub to their final destination.

The Commission seeks proposals for pilot projects that will test *innovative* ideas in service design to *enhance* an eligible rider's mobility. Therefore, applicants should not propose to use grant funds for services that are already being provided utilizing the Trip and Equipment Grant, or merely to supplement existing operational costs. Eligible applicants include Community Transportation Coordinators (CTCs) and Transportation Network Companies (TNCs), and must be registered in MyFloridaMarketPlace.

**Applicants are advised to carefully read this entire program manual for instructions and guidance prior to submitting proposals for funding consideration.** The manual includes the Commission's expectations, the criteria that will be used to identify exemplary projects for funding, and the process to apply for funding.

**DEADLINE: Complete proposals must be submitted to the Commission by May 3, 2021.**

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Questions relating to this funding opportunity are to be submitted in written format only to: [FLCTDGrantApps@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:FLCTDGrantApps@dot.state.fl.us) no later than March 19, 2021. Answers will not be provided verbally. Answers to questions received will be posted on the Commission's website (<http://ctd.fdot.gov/Grants.htm>) by March 26, 2021.

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### PART I - PROGRAM MANUAL

#### 1. Program Description

CTD announces the availability of funding to support the Innovative Service Development (ISD) grants. The Commission seeks proposals for pilot projects that will test innovative ideas in service design to enhance an eligible rider’s mobility.

It should be emphasized that not all innovations require an entirely new idea. Most often, innovation refers to a change in something already established, especially by introducing methods, ideas, or products that add value in some way. For the purposes of the ISD Grant Program, innovation is defined as “Doing something in a new or improved way to enhance an eligible rider’s mobility.” Proposals may include ideas that have already been implemented elsewhere; the key element is that the project should introduce something that is new or improved *to the local community*.

Because of the focus on enhancing an eligible rider’s mobility, ISD grants cannot be used to fund services that are already provided utilizing the Trip and Equipment Grant or to supplant or replicate existing operations. However, funds can be used to modify or expand existing operations to fill a gap, reach a new market, or otherwise improve service quality. Additionally, the grant may be used to fund new service options that are not offered within the existing service portfolio.

CTD's goal for the ISD grants is to identify and test promising mobility access solutions that can be applied in other communities. Therefore, recipients will be required to provide a mid-year report of progress as well as a year-end report that highlights lessons learned and includes actual vs. expected outcomes, as well as challenges and barriers and how they were addressed. To that end, applicants must have the ability to yield data demonstrating project outcomes related to at least one of the following program objectives:

1. Increase a transportation disadvantaged person's access to and departure from job training, employment, health care, and other life-sustaining services;
2. Enhance regional connectivity and cross-county mobility; or,
3. Reduce the difficulty in connecting transportation disadvantaged persons to a transportation hub and from the hub to their final destination.

As part of this effort, recipients will also be required to conduct periodic customer satisfaction surveys. Funded projects have the potential to be showcased in various statewide and national reports and forums. To increase the likelihood of project success and sustainability, applicants are strongly encouraged to work collaboratively and leverage partnerships.

## **2. Award Information**

**ESTIMATED AVAILABLE FUNDS:** \$10,000,000

Submitting an application does not guarantee a grant will be awarded nor does it ensure that the grant will be funded in the amount requested. If the project funding is adjusted, the applicant will be contacted to confirm that the proposed project is still viable and can be completed with the amount awarded. There is no minimum or maximum grant award amount; however, contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, CTD intends to fund as many meritorious projects as possible at levels of funding necessary to implement meaningful pilot projects.

Applicants should be mindful that successful innovations will improve effectiveness and/or efficiency to the degree that the innovation eventually becomes self-sustaining. Indeed, the purpose of funding innovation is to test and incubate new ideas that have strong potential to become mainstream solutions. Therefore, while the Commission may choose to fund projects for an incubation period over multiple years (contingent upon the availability of funds), it should not be assumed that a project selected for award will be funded indefinitely.

## **3. Eligibility**

### **A. Eligible Recipients**

All eligible recipients must be registered in MyFloridaMarketPlace. Eligible recipients are:

1. A community transportation coordinator (CTC), as defined in Section 427.011, F.S.
2. A transportation network company (TNC), as defined in Section 627.748, F.S.

## **B. Allowable Expenditures**

These grant funds are for the specific purpose of funding a portion of passenger trips provided to eligible individuals who are transportation disadvantaged, as defined in s. 427.011(1), F.S. The grant recipient shall provide service before seeking payment. A trip funded under this grant is considered a one-way trip that is not paid for by any other federal, state, or local government program for an eligible individual who meets the definition of transportation disadvantaged.

There shall be an approved eligibility application for each rider who receives trips funded by this grant. Documentation which supports the eligibility determination shall be maintained by the grant recipient as part of the rider's eligibility file. This documentation must be maintained for a minimum of five years after the grant ends. Personal care attendants (PCAs), escorts, and companions of eligible individuals are recognized as a cost of doing business and should be accounted for when determining a rate structure.

All expenditures must be documented, reasonable, necessary, and related to the project. The purchase of capital equipment is not eligible for reimbursement under this grant program. Costs incurred prior to grant agreement execution cannot be charged to the project nor will the Commission retroactively execute a grant agreement.

## **C. Local Match**

Funding from this grant program provides ninety-percent (90%) of project costs, with the applicant providing a ten-percent (10%) cash match generated from local sources. No state or federal government revenues are acceptable as local match.

Examples of cash generated from local sources include local appropriations, dedicated tax revenues, private donations, net income generated from advertising and concessions, contract revenues, and rider fares.

## **4. Application and Submission**

Complete proposals must be emailed to [FLCTDGrantApps@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:FLCTDGrantApps@dot.state.fl.us) by 11:59 p.m. E.D.T. on May 3, 2021. Applicants are urged to submit their proposals as far in advance of the deadline as possible to allow time to resubmit in the event that additional information or clarification is needed.

Applicants may submit more than one proposal, but must use a separate application package for each project. Renewals of previously funded ISD projects that meet the funding objectives will be considered; however, a new complete application package is required. Proposals may also be for multi-year projects, up to three (3) years. Funding for multi-year projects will be contingent upon annual legislative approval. Multi-year projects are NOT required to submit a new application package for each year of the project.

Part II of this manual provides instructions for the grant application form and the project scope.

**Applications that are incomplete or do not follow the instructions will not be**

**considered.** A proposal submission may contain additional supporting documentation as attachments. Every proposal must consist of the following:

1. Innovative Service Development Grant Application
2. Project Scope, following the instructions outlined in this manual
3. Proposed Project Expense Budget

Application packages may be revised and resubmitted via email up to the application deadline. The latest update received electronically will be reviewed by the subcommittee for final consideration. Final award decisions are scheduled to be approved at the Commission's business meeting during the week of May 31, 2021.

## **5. Application Review**

### **A. Project Evaluation Criteria**

The Commission will evaluate proposals according to the following criteria: (i.) Evidence of Need; (ii.) Project Description; (iii.) Project Innovation; (iv.) Demonstration of Proposed Outcomes; (v.) Collaboration and Partnership; and (vi) Other Required Application Elements. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate the responsiveness of a project to any and all criteria with the most relevant information that the applicant can provide, regardless of whether such information is specifically requested in this manual. Note: In addition to the criteria below, multi-year projects and project renewals will be evaluated based on the project's merits and past performance. Multi-year projects will be reviewed prior to awarding funds for the following fiscal year.

#### *i. Evidence of Need*

The Commission will evaluate proposals based on how the proposed project will address the challenges and needs relating to local mobility access. The Commission will consider the scale and urgency of the local mobility access challenge, as well as the size of the specific populations served by the proposed project. Applicants may provide supporting documentation or evidence of the challenge(s), such as from a locally developed Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP).

#### *ii. Project Description*

Applicants must provide a detailed description of the proposed project, including the service area and type(s) of service that will be offered, estimated number of trips and riders the proposed project will serve, potential or planned destinations, how the project will be implemented, and the process for ensuring rider eligibility pursuant to Chapter 427, Florida Statutes.

#### *iii. Project Innovation*

The Commission will evaluate proposals on the ability to demonstrate that the proposed project is innovative as defined in this manual. ISD grants cannot be used to fund services that are

already provided utilizing the Trip and Equipment Grant or to supplant or replicate existing operations. Applicants must clearly demonstrate that the proposed project (1) will do something in a new or improved way that differs from services already being provided, and (2) is designed to enhance an eligible rider's mobility. Mobility enhancement may include modifying or expanding existing operations to fill a gap, reach a new market, or otherwise improve service quality. For example, an applicant could propose to build upon its existing on-demand services by providing trips that cannot be pre-scheduled, such as hospital discharge, medical trips at early-onset of illness, or pick-ups from late medical appointments.

#### *iv. Demonstration of Proposed Outcomes*

The Commission will evaluate proposals on the ability to demonstrate project outcomes that address at least one of the following objectives of the ISD Grant Program.

1. Increase a transportation disadvantaged person's access to and departure from job training, employment, health care, and other life-sustaining services;
2. Enhance regional connectivity and cross-county mobility; or,
3. Reduce the difficulty in connecting transportation disadvantaged persons to a transportation hub and from the hub to their final destination.

Recipients shall produce a year-end report that highlights project outcomes, lessons learned, and how challenges and barriers were addressed. Therefore, proposals must describe the project's intended outcomes and show the applicant's ability to collect performance data (both during and at the conclusion of the pilot project) to demonstrate actual vs. intended outcomes. Recipients shall also be required to submit the performance data, including data obtained from customer satisfaction surveys, in the form of a mid-year progress report.

#### *v. Collaboration and Partnership*

While not a requirement, applicants are strongly encouraged to work collaboratively through cross-agency partnerships. By pooling resources and sharing risk and responsibilities, sound partnerships increase the likelihood of project success and sustainability. In addition to describing key project partners and their specific role in the project, applicants may strengthen their proposals further by providing evidence of strong commitment from partners, such as letters of commitment, cooperative agreements, or memoranda of understanding (MOU).

Examples of partnerships include other purchasing agencies (Florida Department of Transportation, Agency for Persons with Disabilities, etc.), local programs serving the targeted riders (CareerSource centers, Vocational Rehabilitation, local state college, etc.), and/or private businesses (grocery stores, medical centers, construction sites, etc.).

#### *vi. Other Required Application Elements*

Proposals will also be evaluated based on the adequate provision of information regarding the project's proposed budget and service rates (including how the proposed service rates were determined), as well as the proposed timeline, project personnel, and local matching funds.

## **B. Review and Selection Process**

Proposals that are 1) full and complete according to all instructions in this manual and 2) received from eligible recipients by May 3, 2021 will be evaluated by a subcommittee of the Commission. The subcommittee will provide its recommendation to the Commission for final award decisions. The Commission reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, and may provide reduced funding or fund only part of a proposal.

If awarded, the Commission expects the Grantee to implement the proposed project (including services provided) on July 1, or shortly after the execution of the grant agreement (whichever is later). A significant delay in starting or providing services may result in a decrease or reassignment of funds to another project.

Once the Commission has approved the award and the amount, a grant agreement will be forwarded to the applicant for execution. No significant changes can be made to the project once it has been approved by the Commission.

Prior to the execution of the grant agreement, a complete application package with original signatures shall be mailed to:

Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged  
605 Suwannee Street, Mail Station 49  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450

### **Project Timetable**

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| March 9, 2021        | Release Innovative Service Development Grant Program Manual and Application Package |
| March 11, 2021       | Innovative Service Development Grant Program Workshop                               |
| March 19, 2021       | Submission of Written Questions to CTD  |
| March 26, 2021       | Posting of Questions and Answered on CTD webpage                                    |
| May 3, 2021          | Applications due to the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged             |
| Week of May 18, 2021 | Review Subcommittee Meeting   |
| Week of May 31, 2021 | Commission Meeting  |
| July 1, 2021         | Earliest date grant agreements can be effective                                     |
| June 30, 2022        | All grant agreements will terminate   |
| August 15, 2022      | Year-end report and final invoice due   |



## **6. Invoicing**

The Grantee shall invoice the Commission for each month that services are provided. The Grantee will make every effort to submit invoices within 30 days after the month of service provision. Invoices related to this grant agreement shall be completed on the invoice form(s) provided by the Commission and submitted in accordance with the Commission's most recent Invoicing Procedures for the Provision of Transportation and Capital Equipment unless otherwise notified by the Commission.

## **7. Florida Single Agency Audit Requirements**

Grant recipients of state financial assistance awarded by the Commission will be required to comply with Section 215.97, Florida Statutes.

## **PART II**

# **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

**Applicants are advised to carefully read the entire program manual for instructions and guidance prior to submitting proposals for funding consideration. Applications that are incomplete or do not follow the required instructions will not be considered.**

### **Grant Application Form Instructions**

**LEGAL NAME OF APPLICANT:** The full legal name of the applicant's organization, not an individual. Name must match the Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) and the information that is registered with MyFloridaMarketPlace ([www.dms.myflorida.com](http://www.dms.myflorida.com)).

**FEDERAL EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER:** The number used by all employers within the United States to identify their payroll and federal income tax. Name must match the FEIN and the information that is registered with MyFloridaMarketPlace.

**REGISTERED ADDRESS:** This should be the grant applicant's mailing address as registered in MyFloridaMarketPlace and will be the address on the grant agreement. This address shall also be consistent with the address associated with the applicant's FEIN.

**CONTACT PERSON, PHONE NUMBER AND E-MAIL ADDRESS:** Provide the name of the person who will be the point of contact for this grant, their phone number, and email address.

**APPLICANT ORGANIZATION TYPE:** Check which type of organization applicant is (CTC or TNC). See Page 2 for clarification of definitions.

**APPLICATION TYPE:** Use a check to designate the type of application (New ISD Project or Renewal of Previously Funded ISD Project).

**PROJECT LOCATION:** Provide the geographical location(s) of the proposed project. The location can be a single county or multiple contiguous counties. Projects will not replace or supplant transportation services provided by a CTC in their respective service area unless the affected CTC is unable to provide the service or the project is to serve a target population that is not currently being served.

**PROPOSED PROJECT START DATE:** The start date shall be July 1, 2021, or the date of grant agreement execution, if later than July 1, 2021.

## **Project Scope Instructions**

This is a competitive grant application. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that each section provides sufficient information for the review subcommittee. To be considered, the Project Scope must be clearly written and address all required elements. The Project Scope shall be no more than fifteen (15) pages, including any attachments/exhibits such as maps, etc. Letters of commitment or memoranda of understanding (MOU) from project partners will not count against the page limit. The project scope shall include a narrative of the proposed project description as outlined below.

Proposals will be evaluated on a 100-point scale, according to the points assigned to each evaluation criterion. Collaboration and Partnership, while strongly encouraged, is not a requirement. Proposals that do not involve a partnership will not be penalized; however, those that do will have the opportunity to earn 10 bonus points, for a maximum total score of 110 points. While project scores play an important role in guiding the review subcommittee, funding decisions are also contingent upon the availability of funds, and are ultimately made at the subcommittee's discretion.

### **EVIDENCE OF NEED (Required, 15 points)**

Begin by describing service limitations or gaps within the current transportation system and the resulting mobility access challenge(s). Be specific, including details regarding the scale or urgency of the challenge and the size of the specific populations that are affected. Applicants may provide documentation or evidence of the challenge(s), such as from a locally developed Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP), other planning document, or other supporting information. DO NOT attach an entire TDSP or other supporting document. Provide only the passages from the document that have relevance to the proposal, along with references to specific page numbers.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Required, 15 points)**

Provide a detailed description of the proposed project, including the service area and type(s) of service that will be offered; the estimated number of trips and riders the proposed project will serve; and potential or planned destinations such as a veterans' hospital, employment center, educational/training location, or other life-sustaining activities.

Additionally, explain how the project will be implemented, including details on how existing and potential riders will be informed of the proposed service and how services will be requested and provided. If the proposed service will utilize a transportation hub to connect customers to the broader transportation system, explain the coordination of schedules between the services and how the rider will transfer between the two systems.

Lastly, explain the process for ensuring riders are eligible to receive Transportation Disadvantaged services. Include how rider eligibility will be determined and, if not by the applicant, what organization will be determining that a rider is transportation disadvantaged, pursuant to Chapter 427, Florida Statutes.

### **PROJECT INNOVATION (Required, 25 points)**

Explain how the proposed project (1) will do something in a new or improved way that differs from services already being provided, and (2) is designed to enhance an eligible rider's mobility. Mobility enhancement may include modifying or expanding existing operations to fill a gap, reach a new market, or otherwise improve service quality. For example, an applicant could propose to build upon its existing on-demand services by providing trips that cannot be pre-scheduled, such as hospital discharge, medical trips at early-onset of illness, or pick-ups from late medical appointments. Additionally, the grant may be used to fund entirely new service options that are not offered within the existing service portfolio. Note: Proposals may include ideas that have already been implemented elsewhere; the key element is that the project should introduce something that is new or improved *to the local community*.

### **DEMONSTRATION OF PROPOSED OUTCOMES (Required, 35 points)**

- A. Describe the proposed project's intended outcomes, and how they will address at least one of the following program objectives. It is not necessary to address more than one objective, nor will projects receive additional points for doing so.
- 1. Increase a transportation disadvantaged person's access to and departure from job training, employment, health care, and other life-sustaining services,**
  - 2. Enhance regional connectivity and cross-county mobility, or**
  - 3. Reduce the difficulty in connecting transportation disadvantaged persons to a transportation hub and from the hub to their final destination.**
- B. Recipients shall produce a year-end report that highlights project outcomes, lessons learned, and how challenges and barriers were addressed. Therefore, applicants must show the ability to collect performance data (both during and at the conclusion of the pilot project) to demonstrate actual vs. intended outcomes. Provide details regarding the specific performance data that will be collected and analyzed to demonstrate the project's actual vs. intended outcomes, and whether your agency has verified that the data are in fact available for collection. As an example, an applicant could describe how reporting tools from scheduling software and on-board technology will be used to calculate ridership data and on-time performance.

Additionally, applicants must confirm the ability to submit performance data (including data obtained from customer satisfaction surveys) in the form of a mid-year progress report, and to submit the year-end report.

### **COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP (Strongly Encouraged, 10 bonus points)**

If the proposed project is collaborative, describe key project partners, their specific role in the project, and how the collaboration increases the likelihood of the project's long-term sustainability and success. Applicants may further strengthen their proposals by attaching letters of commitment, cooperative agreements, MOU, or other evidence of strong commitment from partners. Examples of partnerships include other purchasing agencies (Florida Department

of Transportation, Agency for Persons with Disabilities, etc.), local programs serving the targeted riders (CareerSource centers, Vocational Rehabilitation, local state college, etc.), and/or private businesses (grocery stores, medical centers, construction sites, etc.).

**OTHER REQUIRED APPLICATION ELEMENTS (Required, 10 points)**

Project Budget, Funding, and Proposed Service Rates

A. Provide a Proposed Project Expense Budget that supports the total amount of funding requested. All expenses must be allowable, reasonable, and necessary. A sample template is provided for convenience. Multi-year projects must include a Proposed Project Expense Budget for each fiscal year.

B. Provide the proposed project service rate(s) by mode and unit of service (trip, mile). Demonstrate how the proposed rates were determined. Rate(s) for services will be finalized prior to grant execution.

Project Timeline

Provide a project timeline. This should identify the project start date, project implementation date and any major milestones (e.g. procurement of equipment or operator, hiring personnel, beginning of on-the-road services, etc.).

Project Personnel

Provide the name, current title and summary of work experience for each key staff member who will work on the project. Do not include individual resumes.

Local Match

Identify the source of the local match and when such funds will be available.

## ATTACHMENT I Project Ideas

Below is a list of ideas for potential projects. NOTE: the below is not intended to be an exhaustive list.

- **Projects designed to improve access to and from employment, training, and educational activities** by extending service hours for late-night shift work or return from evening classes. Further illustrations can include the utilization of flexible services that directly connect to the employment and educational destinations. Project proposals may coordinate the activity with partner agencies and organizations to target a specific facility or destination. Examples of service types include those designed with on-demand transportation providers or using dynamic scheduling applications to assign on-demand trips with an existing fleet.
- **Projects that incorporate partnerships with other purchasing agencies to coordinate transportation services for a specific TD population.** For example, an applicant can partner with FDOT to coordinate transportation for low-income individuals to access job training and road construction sites funded under the M-CORES Workforce Development Program. A partnership may also include a local program that is serving a specific population, such as a CareerSource center or state college program, where transportation has been identified as a barrier to accessing the program.
- **Projects designed to expand service hours with scheduled off-peak service options beyond the current service hours or days of the week.** This could include a partnership with a TNC, taxi company, or other transportation provider to deliver spontaneous trips or trips reserved less than 24 hours in advance. This may also include services offered during non-traditional hours, such as on-demand trips for riders who commute to and from late shift employment sites.
- **Projects designed to address urgent and unplanned trips.** The service can be targeted to address last-minute medical appointments, job interviews, or calls to work; hospital discharge; dialysis; or cancer treatments. Delivering transportation services without excessive scheduling time can be provided by micro-transit services, on-demand services that can be delivered with transportation network companies (TNC), or by using software to assign an existing fleet. The project services should improve the scheduling lead time to allow same-day trips, ideally within one hour or less.
- **Projects designed to improve access to regional destinations by expanding service coverage to cross-county destinations.** This may include scheduled and/or on-demand services that expand the service area beyond the customer's county of residence to regional destinations such as specialized healthcare facilities, educational institutions, or other services not available in the local community.

- **Projects that make use of a transportation hub to seamlessly connect customers to the broader transportation system.** ISD grant funds can be used to provide trips via scheduled and/or on-demand services that target a specific geographic area or segment of the TD population. Examples of this type of service include on-demand services that connect veterans' hospitals, healthcare complexes, or educational institutions to a transportation hub.