

BOSTONBRT

Request for Proposals Questions and Answers April 2017

1. Does the applicant need to demonstrate support from the MBTA as part of the response to the RFP or is that something that will be coordinated by the Boston BRT technical team after the award is made?
 - a. The MBTA has agreed to partner with BostonBRT on this RFP. The BostonBRT team will coordinate the applicant and the MBTA. If the applicant is working with another operator, the applicant should demonstrate support from that operator.
2. Does the applicant have to have an “in the ground” implementation phase or is funding available for projects that only entail planning, engineering and community engagement? If an implementation phase is required, please clarify if the proponent should assume that the pilot service is operated by the MBTA (and if that should be discussed it with them in advance of the application), or must assume it is operated by the proponent, or by some other third party.
 - a. The applicant must plan for and execute an “in the ground” demonstration/pilot project as part of this effort. As noted in #1, there is no need to coordinate with the MBTA operator in advance of submitting an application; BostonBRT coordinated with the MBTA in the development of the RFP and will closely work with MassDOT staff throughout this effort. Additional or new service could be part of the pilot and be operated independently from the MBTA, or paid for by pilot funds.
3. How is off-board fare collection during an implementation phase to be put into place without equipment? Does the proponent just outline a process or assumptions for this instead, as if this is a permanent BRT route operated by the MBTA after AFC is implemented?
 - a. This will vary from route to route. The applicant should outline assumptions, and detail the type of equipment that may be required for the pilot. The technical team will work with the applicant and the MBTA to determine what is feasible for the pilot in terms of equipment, costs or operations.
4. Will Nelson\Nygaard be responsible for working with applicant and the MBTA to develop equipment, driver and overall cost estimates for operating a service?
 - a. Yes, if warranted by the applicant. These types of study elements (e.g. cost estimating) will be determined by the applicant at the time of the application, or at the scoping phase at the onset of the project.
5. Are the following components eligible for grant funding if described by the applicant: funding for a study of alignment, dedicated ROW, signal prioritization, and the impacts of removal of left turns against bus way? Can these be completed as part of the grant project and not completed in advance?
 - a. Yes
6. Does the proponent assume that ITDP and Nelson\Nygaard are the consultants who assist with these studies or can the proponent engage other consultants?
 - a. ITDP and Nelson\Nygaard are to be used for primary technical assistance. For

study elements that are outside of ITDP and Nelson\Nygaard's expertise, the applicant can use the \$100K to engage other consultants. We discourage the use of grant funds to support technical assistance that can be provided, compliments of BostonBRT, from either Nelson\Nygaard or ITDP.

7. Please clarify if the technical assistance provided by ITDP and Nelson\Nygaard comes out of the up to \$100K grant award or is it in addition to the award? Does it need to be quantified as part of the applicant's budget? Is there a cash or in-kind match required of the applicant?
 - a. The technical assistance provided by Nelson/Nygaard or ITDP is in addition to the award amount.
 - b. The applicant is required to provide a preliminary budget detailing how the revenues requested will be used. If selected, the budget will be refined and finalized with assistance from BostonBRT and the technical team.
 - c. There is no match required, but combining these funds with additional funds is welcomed as it demonstrates a level of private or public sector commitment to the pilot, and more importantly future implementation.
8. Will the grantor consider extending the grant application period into July? Many people have fiscal year ends on June 30. An extension could help proponents put together more complete proposals and steer clear of fiscal year end project completions.
 - a. The RFP was posted on the www.bostonbrt.org website on March 20 and applicants have until May 31 to submit an application. We do not anticipate an extension.
9. It may be possible to get letters of interest from local residents and municipalities to engage in the study and the exploration process, however it could be very difficult for a non-profit applicant to commit to implementation by others before some of the key trade-offs have been studied through the grant and a community engagement process has been completed. To satisfy this requirement would a letter that says "they are aware of these possibilities as an outcome of the study and they're willing to consider" suffice as part of the application?
 - a. Yes, and the application should outline a plan to address the trade-offs and engage communities along the corridor.
10. If an applicant is a shuttle operator, and proposes to use their own equipment during the pilot, are there requirements to carry the public during the pilot project? Is additional legal work and liability insurance related to this an acceptable cost coverable by the grant?
 - a. Yes and yes
11. Does the Project expect a communications and marketing plan as an outcome of the work developed under the grant?
 - a. Yes, although the scope and size of the plans are expected to vary with each corridor. BostonBRT's communications team is able to assist.
12. Can grant funds be requested to extend the applicant's ability to staff and manage the project?
 - a. Yes, but please note that these funds are not intended to increase staffing for the applicant organization. It is our expectation that the majority of the funding will be used to implement the pilot. We will require the applicant demonstrates the

appropriate scale and use of funding dedicated to project management versus other project needs.

13. Please confirm that each grant recipient is eligible to receive up to \$100,000 for additional technical support regardless of the number of grants awarded.
 - a. Correct. It is our desire to award fewer, larger grants to increase the likelihood of success for the pilots. In some cases, grant awards may be less than the maximum award amount, depending on the proposal submitted and the amount requested.
14. How should potential grantees plan to fund unanticipated work (e.g. costs for supplemental design submissions, signal equipment upgrades, etc.) requested by municipal or transportation agencies during the project? What if these requests cause the costs to exceed the \$100,000 grant amount?
 - a. Upon award, ITDP and Nelson\Nygaard will work with the applicant to further refine the scope and budget for the project to help account for unanticipated work. As with all projects, the grantee should budget for some contingencies. No additional funds will be provided from the grantor. Additionally, the RFP is intended to fund a pilot, with the applicant helping to determine the length of time the pilot is in effect – which may obviate the need for more detailed design or construction submissions.
15. Would BostonBRT be willing to consider a project timeline exceeding 6 months? If so, under what circumstances?
 - a. Yes, a full project scope and timeline will be determined with the team at the onset of the project.
16. Should potential grantees include contingency funding for restoring the project back to pre-trial conditions, when physical modifications have been made as part of the pilot project?
 - a. We expect that the funding needed to restore the project back to pre-trial conditions will vary from corridor to corridor. It is the applicant's responsibility to restore the corridor back to pre-trial conditions.
17. How will the scope, contract and budget of work with Nelson\Nygaard and the Institute for Transportation Development Policy be arranged? Will these items be negotiated between each company, BostonBRT, and the grant recipient following the award? Will BostonBRT or the grant recipient be the direct project manager?
 - a. The applicant will enter into a grant agreement with a BostonBRT third-party funder.
 - b. The scope for the work with ITDP and Nelson\Nygaard will be determined with the applicant, BostonBRT, and the consultants. The contracts and budgets are already in place directly between the BostonBRT funders and the consultants.
 - c. The grant recipient is the direct project manager with BostonBRT serving an advisory role.
18. Will the grant recipient be responsible for returning any funds if the pilot project is unable to be implemented?
 - a. Yes. Should the pilot not be implementable, we may require the recipient to return any unused funds.