



Specialized Transportation Grant Program

Cycle 13 Call for Projects

Stakeholder Workshop

February 7, 2024

Questions and Answers

General Program Questions

#	Question	Answer
1	What does STGP stand for?	Specialized Transportation Grant Program
2	What is the definition of on-demand? Within 1 hour? 24 hours?	The STGP typically funds demand-responsive service but does not preclude on-demand options. The STGP does not define on-demand service. The current threshold for on-demand service through the SANDAG Access for All Grant Program is 12 hours.
3	Do you have figures on the cost of fueling gas powered vehicles versus having your own EV charging station?	No. SANDAG recommends that prospective applicants contact the California Association of Coordinated Transportation (CALACT) and vehicle vendors for this information.

Eligibility Questions

#	Question	Answer
4	If I am interested in my rural, unincorporated area, I don't need this workshop?	The Section 5310 program administered by SANDAG funds grants in the urbanized areas of San Diego County. The Senior Mini-Grant Program funds grants countywide.
5	What is the match amount for the [Section] 5310 [program]?	Section 5310 operating grants require a minimum 50% match. Section 5310 vehicle grants require between a 10% and 20% match depending on the vehicle type. All other Section 5310 grants require a 20% match.
6	Can STGP funding be used for a vehicle purchase to transport	Yes, if the vehicle will provide service to older adults and individuals with disabilities.

#	Question	Answer
	volunteers to education and outreach events?	
7	Which funding source allows for the purchase of capital items?	The federal Section 5310 program funds the purchase of new, accessible vehicles and the acquisition of contracted transportation services.
8	Could STGP funding be used to study or evaluate ADA accessibility for bus stops?	No. The STGP only funds operating, mobility management, and capital grants, not planning efforts or feasibility studies.
9	We're a nonprofit that services individuals with disabilities and need a shuttle to help with pickups and drop-offs. It sound like we would be eligible for Section 5310. Does it matter that we do not serve the general public?	The purchase of an accessible shuttle to transport individuals with disabilities is an eligible Section 5310 expense. Both client-based and public transportation are allowable.
10	Do all the volunteers have to be older or disabled?	No. Volunteers can be of any age or disability status. Those being transported or served must be members of the target population: older adults and/or individuals with disabilities.
11	Is Section 5310 only in the urbanized areas, so unincorporated areas would not have access?	The Section 5310 program administered by SANDAG is for the urbanized areas of San Diego County. Caltrans administers the Section 5310 program for the rural areas of San Diego County.
12	Can we apply for more than one type of grant? I.e. Operating, mobility management, and capital	Yes. Eligible applicants may apply for multiple grant types.
13	Can you clarify the age of older adults?	The Section 5310 program defines older adults as individuals 65 and older. The Senior Mini-Grant program defines older adults as individuals 60 and older.
14	Is the match source for the STGP cash only?	SANDAG requires a cash match for Section 5310 vehicle grants. For all other STGP grants, there are other eligible match sources, including in-kind donations such as volunteer driver hours.
15	Is electric vehicle charging infrastructure an eligible capital expense?	SANDAG is evaluating this topic and has not yet determined whether charging infrastructure would be an eligible expense.

Competitive Process Questions

#	Question	Answer
16	Do you carry over funds if they are not all distributed?	If the available funds are not all distributed through a particular Call for Projects, they may be rolled over to the next Call for Projects. SANDAG may be required to return unallocated federal Section 5310 program funds to the Federal Transit Administration.
17	Did you mention when the grant will open up?	The STGP Cycle 13 Call for Projects is anticipated to be released on July 1, 2024. Awarded Senior Mini-Grant projects can begin July 1, 2025, and awarded Section 5310 projects can begin October 1, 2025.
18	Can you share how you select the evaluators? What level of experience do they have with Specialized Transportation?	<p>For each funding source, SANDAG selects at least three, but no more than, ten external evaluators who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are familiar with the San Diego region and the STGP goals and objectives. • Have diverse expertise in fields related to specialized transportation. • Do not have a prohibited conflict with any of the applicants or proposed projects that would preclude a fair evaluation • Agree to keep confidential information related to the call for projects protected from disclosure <p>SANDAG requires prospective evaluators to complete a questionnaire to attest to their expertise. For more information, see the SANDAG Specialized Transportation Program Management Plan, which is on the STGP web page.</p>
19	Will this grant be on BidNet Direct again? They had some false requirements for the last cycle that caused us to be disqualified.	Yes. Please reach out to us so we can try to troubleshoot any issues encountered last cycle.

Selection Criteria Questions

#	Question	Answer
20	Is it possible to see last year's question about environmental Responsibility? I remember that question being challenging for us.	The STGP Cycle 12 Call for Projects Evaluation Criteria is posted to the STGP web page .
21	Are you seeing that smaller agencies are being left out (and parts of the County not being served) because of the [minimum and maximum grant] amount requirements?	In the last competitive cycle, four agencies were awarded Senior Mini-Grant funding of the nine that applied, and about three quarters of the available Senior Mini-Grant funding was awarded to two agencies. Additionally, in the last competitive cycle, nearly all proposed Section 5310 grants were fully funded. The STGP awards were distributed to a range of small and large agencies.
22	How is coordination defined in the criteria [of the regions analyzed]?	Through the benchmarking analysis, staff found that coordination generally encompassed not only the degree to which specialized transportation providers work with one another to deliver service in a more effective way, but also the extent to which proposed grants align with a locally-developed Coordinated Plan . The benchmarking analysis is available on the STGP web page.
23	Is the evaluation criteria expected to change?	The evaluation criteria is informed by stakeholder input and ultimately approved by the SANDAG Board of Directors, so it is premature to say whether the criteria will or will not change.
24	How are the minimum and maximum grant awards decided?	The minimum grant award is based on how much it costs to purchase one accessible vehicle and the administrative time and effort on both SANDAG and the grantee to carry out an STGP grant. Both the minimum and maximum grant award thresholds have changed from STGP competitive cycle to cycle and are informed by stakeholder input.
25	Would you consider establishing or reestablishing minimum and maximum funding levels per project?	Yes. We can consider the suggestion.

Other Questions

#	Question	Answer
26	How would a carve-out for FACT impact the amount of funding available?	The SANDAG Transportation Committee will be discussing this at their February 16, 2024, meeting. If there were a carve out for FACT, there potentially could be less funding available for other applicants. That outcome would ultimately depend on what the SANDAG Board of Directors decides.

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