

FAQs

INFRASTRUCTURE FOR REBUILDING AMERICA (INFRA)

Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects Program

U.S. Department of Transportation

1. **What is INFRA?**

- INFRA, Infrastructure for Rebuilding America, is a Federal grant program, that is carrying out the provisions of 23 USC 117, the Nationally Significant Freight and Highway projects. Please see the link, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/23/117>
- The application process is being managed by the US DOT Build America Bureau.

2. **INFRA or FASTLANE, (references to FASTLANE)**

- The program was FASTLANE under the previous Administration, so FY16 Awards are still referred to as FASTLANE.
- Please see the link, <https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/policy-initiatives/buildamerica/283276/fy17-18-infra-vs-fastlane-fact-sheet.pdf> which provides a side-by-side comparison that shows the differences between FASTLANE and INFRA (see reverse).

3. **What does date of obligation mean? When is the obligation deadline for this funding cycle?**

- The date of obligation is when the INFRA funds are obligated to a selected project.
- In general, funds under this program are available for obligation for 4 years after they are authorized.
- Because the NOFO covers FY17 and FY18 funds, the obligation deadline for funding will be September 30, 2020 (FY17 awards) and September 30, 2021 (FY18 awards).

4. **Is FHWA recommending/advising a maximum 20 percent federal share for the applications?**

- It is not an FHWA recommendation or advice on Federal Share.
- The Federal Share is defined in statute.

j) Federal Share.—

(1) In general.—

The Federal share of the cost of a project assisted with a grant under this section may not exceed 60 percent.

(2) Maximum federal involvement.—

Federal assistance other than a grant under this section may be used to satisfy the non-Federal share of the cost of a project for which such a grant is made, except that the total Federal assistance provided for a project receiving a grant under this section may not exceed 80 percent of the total project cost.

(3) Federal land management agencies.—

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any Federal funds other than those made available under this title or title 49 may be used to pay the non-Federal share of the cost of a project carried out under this section by a Federal land management agency, as described under subsection (c)(1)(F).

5. **How can applicants justify the operation and maintenance costs associated with the project's life-cycle?**

- Please submit this question to the INFRA group in FHWA HQ Office at infragrants@dot.gov

6. **What has changed between FASTLANE and INFRA?**

- See side-by-side comparison of FASTLANE and INFRA on the reverse side of this page. It is also available at <https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/policy-initiatives/buildamerica/283276/fy17-18-infra-vs-fastlane-fact-sheet.pdf>
- There are also recorded webinars at <https://www.transportation.gov/buildamerica/infragrants/webinar-series>



INFRA vs. FASTLANE Fact Sheet

The INFRA Grant solicitation will make approximately \$1.5 billion available to projects that are in line with the Administration’s principles to help rebuild, repair, and revitalize America’s crumbling infrastructure.

INFRA advances a pre-existing grant program established in the FAST Act of 2015 and utilizes updated criteria to evaluate projects to align them with national and regional economic vitality goals and to leverage more non-federal funding. Projects that use innovative approaches to make each the federal dollar go further and encourage more parties to put skin in the game through higher leverage, are willing implement innovative approaches to permitting and project delivery, and project sponsors willing to measure their performance and hold themselves accountable will all find something to like in the new NOFO. These priorities mean more infrastructure projects – meaning more safety, more money for projects and a bigger impact overall.

The INFRA Grant program calls on the Department to consider geographic diversity among recipients. This means accounting for the impact of transportation funding for the economic revitalization of rural and disadvantaged communities. The Department intends to provide careful consideration to projects that address transportation needs in rural areas of varying sizes. For rural communities, the Department will consider an applicant’s resource constraints when assessing the leverage criterion.

Below is a side-by-side comparison of the merit criteria used in FASTLANE and INFRA:

FASTLANE	INFRA
<p>Merit criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic outcomes • Mobility outcomes • Safety outcomes • Community and environmental outcomes <p><i>Other review criteria</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost share • Partnership and innovation <p><i>Additional considerations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographic diversity among recipients • Project readiness 	<p>Merit criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National and regional economic vitality • Potential for innovation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Safety ○ Environmental review and permitting ○ Project delivery approach • Leveraging of federal funding • Performance and accountability <p><i>Additional considerations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographic diversity among recipients • Project readiness

For additional explanation of the criteria, please see the INFRA NOFO

What stayed the same from previous FASTLANE competitions?

The eligible costs, project types, cost share, project sizes and other requirements defined by the statute have not changed. The program still focuses on projects that generate national or regional economic, mobility, and safety benefits.