

Program Logistics and Norms

- The program will begin shortly
- Please turn on your video
- Your microphone will be muted when you join
- **Please format your name to “First Name Last Name - City, State”**
- Please use the chat box to say hello to us and your peers! Please also use this space to ask any questions outside of small groups or dedicated Q&A time



Local Infrastructure Hub: Module 6: Writing a Strong Narrative

April 13, 2023

Expected learning outcomes for Module 6

Upon successful completion of this module, city teams will be able to:

- ✓ *Understand the **best practices** for narratives and will be able to produce a compelling grant narrative consistent with the funding opportunity requirements.*
- ✓ *Compile information gathered from the **previous modules** and implement them into the grant narrative.*

Your hosts today



Sandra Urban

Senior Grants Policy Manager, Witt O'Briens

- Over 15 years in local government managing multi-million dollar grants programs, including HUD, FEMA, and HHS.
- Joined Witt O'Brien's in 2022, Senior Grants Policy Manager providing policy guidance and subject matter expert support for federal grant programs.
- Specializes in federal grants regulation and compliance, cradle to grave grants management, and subrecipient compliance and monitoring.



Dr. Dewaynna Horn

Course Deliverer and Facilitator, NLC

- Associate Dean and Professor of Management, College of Business, Texas Woman's University, Houston
- Teaches graduate courses in the Online MBA Program

Bootcamp Structure

Modules	Descriptions	Outputs
0 Predevelopment	Smaller towns and cities with less federal grants experience will develop a basic understanding of the federal grants process and are prepared to attend Modules 1-8.	N/A
1 Setting the Table	Cities will be oriented to the funding program and understand how to navigate the Learning Management System.	N/A
2 Engaging the Community	Cities will be able to draft Community Engagement and Advocacy Strategies and understand the audience for advocacy and project strategies.	Community Engagement Strategy aligned to grant context
3 Federal Administration Priorities	Cities will also be able to incorporate climate, equity, and training and workforce development into their grant applications and demonstrate that they are willing to raise their ambitions in these priority areas.	Plan for incorporating administration priorities into the grant application
4 Data-Driven Decision Making	Cities will understand application data requirements ; general data principles and uses; how to apply data tools to assess local framework and to support a transformational agenda.	Data Strategy aligned to grant context and Federal Administration Priorities
5 Demystifying Capital Stacks and Budgeting	Cities will understand the basics of capital stacks and funding structures for projects; possible matching grant requirements and allowable uses; and applying this understanding towards developing a draft project budget with matching sources and potential new sources of funding	Draft budget for grant application
6 Writing a Strong Narrative	Cities will understand the best practices for narratives and will be able to produce a compelling grant narrative consistent with the funding opportunity requirements.	Draft a grant narrative based on experience of previous modules
7 Package, Submit, and Tell Your Story	Cities will be able to package a full grant application package and develop a plan to advance the request with key officials	Draft a full grant application package validated by a city's chief executive
8 Post Submission: Long Term Capacity Building	Once the applications have been submitted, cities develop plans to successfully administer the grant including how best to (re)-organize local institutional processes	Draft plan for grant administration



Writing a Strong Narrative

Safe Streets and Roads for All – Planning and Demonstration Grants

Substantive changes in new NOFO:

[SS4A-Whats-New-FY23](#)



- The NOFO clarified **eligible activities**
- Applicants are encouraged to include **supplemental planning and demonstration activities** to create or revise an existing Comprehensive Safety Action Plan
- **Flexibility** for a longer grant period of performance under certain circumstances
- Valid Evaluation - grant submission

Safe Streets and Roads for All – Planning and Demonstration Grants, cont.

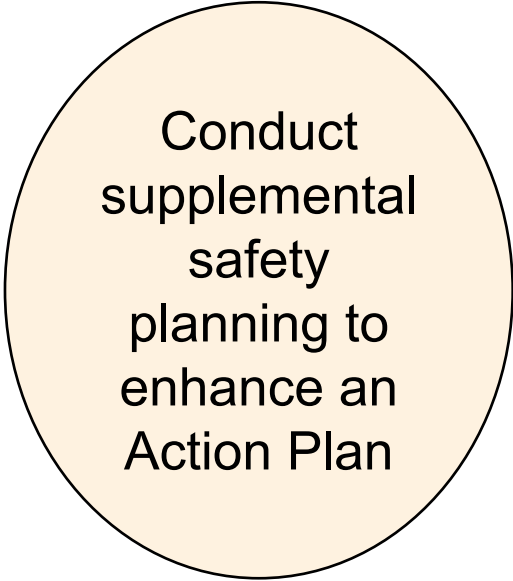
- Applicants seeking funding for supplemental planning and demonstration activities are **no longer required to have a completed Comprehensive Safety Action Plan prior to submitting an application** if they are applying for both creating or revising a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan and supplemental planning and demonstration activities
- **Revised selection criteria** for the “Additional Safety Context” narrative, which is now expected to be **1-2 pages**
- Applicants currently developing a comprehensive safety action plan can request **additional funding** for planning and demonstration

Narrative – Overview

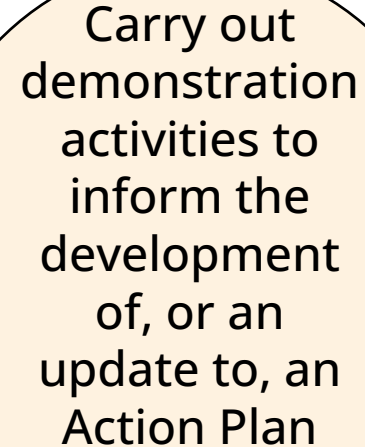
Three different types of activities:



Develop an
Action Plan



Conduct
supplemental
safety
planning to
enhance an
Action Plan



Carry out
demonstration
activities to
inform the
development
of, or an
update to, an
Action Plan

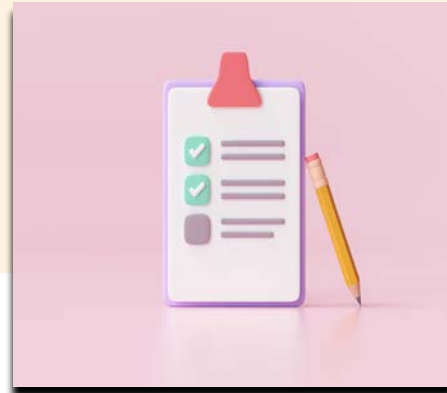
Brief Review of Grant Submission Website

Valid Evaluation Planning and Demonstration Grant Sign Up - [Valid Evaluation](#)

Narrative – Overview

- The following are the requirements for the narrative:
 - Must not exceed **two (2) pages** - UPDATED
 - Must address **#3 Additional Safety Context**

Note: Budget costs will also be considered.



Narrative – #3 Additional Safety Context

- As applicable, funded activities need to inform an Action Plan and support the identification of projects and strategies that will:
 - Lead to a **significant reduction or elimination** of roadway fatalities and serious injuries
 - Employ **low-cost, high-impact strategies** that can improve safety over a wider geographical area
 - Involve engaging with a variety of **public and private stakeholders**
 - Adopt **innovative technologies** to promote safety and equity
 - Be **evidence-based** or build evidence around what works

Narrative – #3 Additional Safety Context

- *What do you do with 2 pages?*
 - Demonstrate consideration of certain components that will enhance implementation of an Action Plan

Narrative – Action Plan Components

- Leadership commitment and goal setting
- Planning structure
- Safety analysis
- Engagement and collaboration
- Equity considerations
- Policy and process changes
- Strategy and project selections
- Progress and transparency

Narrative – Example Supplemental Planning Activities Cont.

- **Topical safety sub-plans** focused on topics such as speed management, vulnerable road users, accessibility for individuals with disabilities, health equity, safety-focused Intelligent Transportation System implementation, lighting, or other relevant safety topics
- **Road safety audits**
- Additional **safety analysis** and **expanded data collection and evaluation** using integrated data
- Targeted **equity assessments**

Narrative – Example Supplemental Planning Activities cont.

- Required **supplemental planning** as a condition to receiving an Implementation Grant award:
 - Updating Action Plans finalized and last updated in 2020 or earlier
 - Broadening the road user focus to include all road users
 - Updating plan components and missing in an eligible plan
- Follow-up **stakeholder engagement and collaboration**
- Reporting on the progress from Action Plan implementation for **transparency**
- Other **roadway safety planning activities** that enhance an Action Plan

Narrative – Example Demonstration Activities

- **Feasibility studies** using quick-build strategies that inform permanent projects in the future (e.g., use of paint and plastic delineator posts to experiment with impermanent roadway design changes, use of removable barriers to re-allocate roadway space).
- Various MUTCD Engineering Studies that further **safety applications** of the MUTCD (e.g., evaluating warrants for traffic signal installation, high-visibility crosswalk markings, bike lane treatments, etc.).



Narrative – Example Demonstration Activities cont.

- Pilot programs for **behavioral or operational activities** that include at least one element of the Safe System Approach (e.g., test out a new education campaign's messaging at a small scale, trial changes to how Emergency Medical Services respond to crashes).
- Pilot programs that demonstrate **safety benefits of technologies** not yet adopted in the community (e.g., variable speed limits, technology for adaptive signal timing, adaptive lighting, Intelligent Transportation Systems, vehicle-to-infrastructure technology, etc.).



Narrative – Key Takeaways

- Substantive changes in new NOFO:
 - The NOFO clarified eligible activities.
 - Applicants are encouraged to include supplemental planning and demonstration activities along with their application to create or revise an existing Comprehensive Safety Action Plan.
 - Flexibility for a longer grant period of performance under certain circumstances.
- Do not exceed two (2) pages
- Address #3 Additional Safety Considerations



Upcoming DOT Webinars

- April 26, 1-2:30pm DOT Overview
- April 27, 1:30pm-3:00pm EST Supplemental Planning and Demonstration Program



Q&A

What's Next?

Sample Narrative Language at the Coaching Session



Coaching and Office Hours

To deepen learning on this subject, Coaching, Office Hours, and Toolkits for this grant are available to all cities in the program



Peer Learning

*Interactive sessions featuring **subject matter experts** on the policy and grant approach; followed by smaller **cohort sessions*** for peer discussions*



Coaching

Smaller, cohort-based sessions to continue to build on **specific application questions** identified in the peer learning session



Office Hours

Support in the form of **designated time slots** with content experts to address specific questions



Tools and Templates

The following resources can help **strengthen core components** of your grant application

Coaching and Office Hours help build forward from the peer learning session



Coaching

Smaller sessions to work on **specific application questions** as peers

Who will you engage with?

Sandra Urban, Witt O'Briens
Ryan Russo, Together Projects

How will you engage?

Coaching session will be held on **Monday, April 17, 1 - 2 EST.**
You will receive a separate calendar invite for the coaching session.



Office Hours

Support in the form of **designated time slots** with content experts to address specific questions

Who will you engage with?

Sandra Urban, Witt O'Briens
Ryan Russo, Together Projects

How will you engage?

Participants will be able to **register for office hours** through Canvas. Reserved time slots will be **15-minutes in length**, but may be extended pending availability and demand. Office hours will be offered on **Thursday, April 20, 2 -3 EST** and **Friday, April 21, 1 - 3 EST.**

Support During this Bootcamp

You have multiple resources you can reach out to for support during this Program.

Navigator



Questions for Navigators can be raised in **onboarding sessions or bi-monthly check-ins** and/or **via email or phone**. The following are types of questions that can be raised with Navigators:

- A city has an **administrative question** about the bootcamp including questions regarding:
 - Timelines
 - Attendance
 - Participation expectations, and/or
 - Future program offerings
 - Certificates

You should have received initial registration emails from your assigned Navigator (either bootcampnavigator1@nlc.org or bootcampnavigator2@nlc.org)

Bootcamp Facilitator

Questions for bootcamp facilitators should be raised during **office hours**. The following are types of questions that could be raised in this setting:

- A city has a question about **content covered** in that week's peer learning or coaching sessions
- A city has a **technical question** about their grant application
- A city has a question about the **Canvas course**

We recommend that cities **hold questions** until the subject is covered in a relevant module. Many questions may be addressed in the learning sessions. Additionally, by holding the question, this ensures that cities will have **access to the appropriate subject matter expert** in office hours. Should a question fall **outside the scope of the curriculum**, cities may raise the question with bootcamp facilitators via email at ssr4aactionbootcamp@nlc.org



Coming up for SS4A Action Planning

Module 6 Coaching Session

Hosted by our Experts, Sandra Urban, from Witt O'Briens and Ryan Russo, Together Projects

When: **Monday, April 17, 1 - 2 EST**

Registration Link:

<https://nlc-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEIcuvqzkvHN232hKSnlJ4WFeXdp8zaw>

Module 6 Office Hours

Thursday, April 20, 2 -3 EST and **Friday, April 21, 1 - 3 EST**

Registration Link

<https://calendly.com/ssr4aactionbootcamp/ssr4a-action-planning-bootcamp-office-hours-mod-6>

Sign up through the calendar link in Canvas

Module 7 Peer Learning Session

Topic: Cities will be able to **package a full grant application** and develop a plan to advance the request with key officials

When: **May 1, 1 PM EST**

Registration Link:

<https://nlc-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlucumvrDouGddn1WceoWaGrCiAbnPl6vYO>

End of Module Survey

Answer the following questions on the Zoom poll to assess your understanding of the content.

- How prepared do you currently feel to submit your application (*Scale of 1-5*)
 - 5 - Very Prepared
 - 4 - Somewhat Prepared
 - 3 - Neither Prepared nor Unprepared
 - 2 - Somewhat Unprepared
 - 1 - Very Unprepared
- How helpful did you find today's session in preparing your grant application? (*Scale of 1-5*)
 - 5 - Very Helpful
 - 4 - Somewhat Helpful
 - 3 - Neither Helpful nor Unhelpful
 - 2 - Somewhat Unhelpful
 - 1 - Very Unhelpful
- Which of the following support resources do you plan to use? (*Multiple Select*)
 - Coaching sessions or office hours
 - Navigators / Support Team
 - Canvas



Tools and Templates



Tools and Templates for Module 6: Writing a Strong Narrative

The following resources can help **strengthen core components** of your grant application

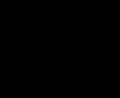
- Valid Eval Planning and Demonstration Grant Sign Up - [Valid Evaluation](#)
- U.S. Department of Transportation - [Public Involvement | US Department of Transportation](#)
- U.S. Department of Transportation Equity Action Plan - [U.S. DOT Equity Action Plan - January 2022 \(transportation.gov\)](#)
- SS4A Planning and Demonstration Grant Application Checklist - <https://usg.valideval.com/api/v1/documents/1729>
- U.S. Department of Transportation National Roadway Safety Strategy - [National Roadway Safety Strategy | US Department of Transportation](#)
- NLC Federal Grant Navigation Equity Dashboard - [NLC Federal Grant Navigation Equity Dashboard | Tableau Public](#)

Thank you!

For questions, please contact your navigator, the office hours and/or coaching lead, or email ssr4aactionbootcamp@nlc.org

For general information, please visit www.localinfrastructurehub.org





WITH SUPPORT FROM:



THE UNITED STATES
CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

