

NTRCI Expression of Interest

Posted Date: July 25, 2007

Response Date: Aug 27, 2007

The National Transportation Research Center, Inc. (“NTRCI”) is anticipating release of USDOT RITA grant funds in August 2007. This grant is to conduct selected transportation research related to Heavy Vehicle Safety, Operational Efficiency, and Security for agencies within the USDOT. All projects must focus on critical USDOT needs in order to be considered for funding. It is estimated that between \$500,000 and \$750,000 (approximately) in funding will be available for new projects not currently funded under the first year of the RITA grant. Any awards for projects will be contingent on the actual availability of funds in both date and amount.

NTRCI is seeking expressions of interest from organizations involved in conducting transportation related research. You are requested to identify a single, significant research topic your organization would be most interested in conducting under the auspices of NTRCI. **Your recommended topic should be submitted to us no later than August 27, 2007**, and will be evaluated by our Research Advisory Committee (RAC). Selection will be made of the topic(s) of greatest interest and value to USDOT and NTRCI. A list of suggested topics of particular interest to NTRCI is provided below; other topics that meet the criteria of addressing Heavy Vehicle Safety, Operational Efficiency, and Security will also be considered.

- Advanced heavy vehicle braking technologies to improve stopping distance or evaluate braking performance.
- Facilitate communication between heavy vehicles and an intelligent system and existing highway infrastructure.
- Provide messaging/communication system capabilities between and among heavy vehicles to provide advanced warning of safety, traffic congestion, work zone or other critical highway issues.
- Provide a comprehensive data security solution for the wireless transmission of heavy vehicle safety and performance related information from the vehicle to highway inspection stations, intelligent highway infrastructure and/or fleet or OEM call centers.
- Provide efficient trailer to tractor communication system to facilitate the concept of wireless truck inspection.

Your suggested topic should be submitted to our Business Manager, Ms. Connie Smith-Holbert (connie.smith-holbert@ntrci.org) on the attached Research Application in sufficient detail to allow evaluation. It is not intended that this form have formal financial and contracting authority sign-off by your organization. If your topic is selected for further consideration, you will be requested to submit a formal proposal with complete technical and cost description. The attached form is intended to provide an overview of your suggested topic and approach. Sufficient detail in non-technical language should be included to enable NTRCI to understand the content, scope and intended result of your proposed research. The cost information should be budgetary estimates but adequate to show approximate cost so available funding can be appropriately allocated upon selection of your topic. A detailed description of the research

effort, milestones, deliverables and supporting cost detail will be required prior to final project selection. As is customary for NTRCI, separate subcontracts or task orders will be awarded to each team member (if any) participating on your project.

Proposed topics must be for projects that can be completed within one year from award date. For planning purposes, do not plan to initiate any project prior to November 1, 2007. In your submittal, it is critical that maximum flexibility exist in start dates. A tentative schedule of activities related to the selection process is below:

1. Request for Research Topics issued July 27, 2007
2. Suggested Research Topics submitted to NTRCI no later than August 27, 2007
3. Research Advisory Committee (RAC) meets to select most promising topics – September 10, 2007
4. Request for detailed Project Descriptions issued September 10, 2007
5. Detailed Project Descriptions submitted to NTRCI no later than October 15, 2007
6. RAC meets to select topics to be funded – October 29, 2007
7. Announcement of selection results issued – October 30, 2007

As the intended purpose of these projects is to further transportation research, meet USDOT needs, and adhere to guidance to further the public/private partnership concept employed by NTRCI, all recommended topics will be evaluated using the following additional criteria:

1. The project *must* include involvement of one or more of NTRCI's founding research partners (ORNL, UT, Battelle).
2. Does the project include private business partners or federal, state, or local agencies?
3. Does the project include cost share: if so, how much and from whom? In order to maximize the breadth of projects funded, NTRCI will not be in a position to fully fund any project. Thus, it is incumbent on the proposer to identify a research partner who can provide both cash funds to share in the cost as well as in-kind contributions.
4. Does the project pass the "so-what" test? Does the research focus on a *real* problem that needs a solution?
5. Is there student participation: if so, how many and from where? Please note that per RITA policy, only US citizens or permanent residents may receive tuition or scholarships funded with RITA grant funds. Non-US citizens may receive compensation (wages) for work performed on the project.

Cost to prepare the application and any subsequent proposal submittal shall be entirely at your expense.

Questions should be referred to Connie Smith-Holbert, NTRCI Business Manager at (865) 946-1200 or email to connie.smith-holbert@ntrci.org.