



NORTH CAROLINA
Department of Transportation

Federal Grants Management at NCDOT

Guidance when Applying for Federal Transportation Competitive Grants

October 27, 2025

Connecting people, products and places safely and efficiently with customer focus, accountability
and environmental sensitivity to enhance the economy and vitality of North Carolina

Disclaimer

The information in this presentation is NCDOT's best understanding of Federal transportation grant applications and grant delivery, as it exists today.

There is no guarantee that this information will remain accurate in the future.

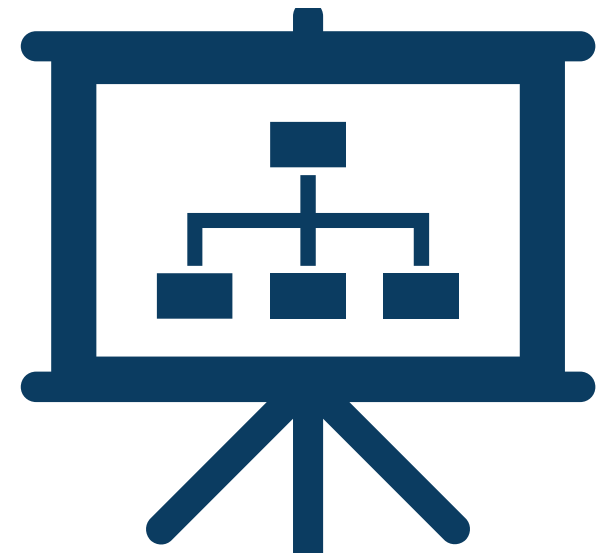
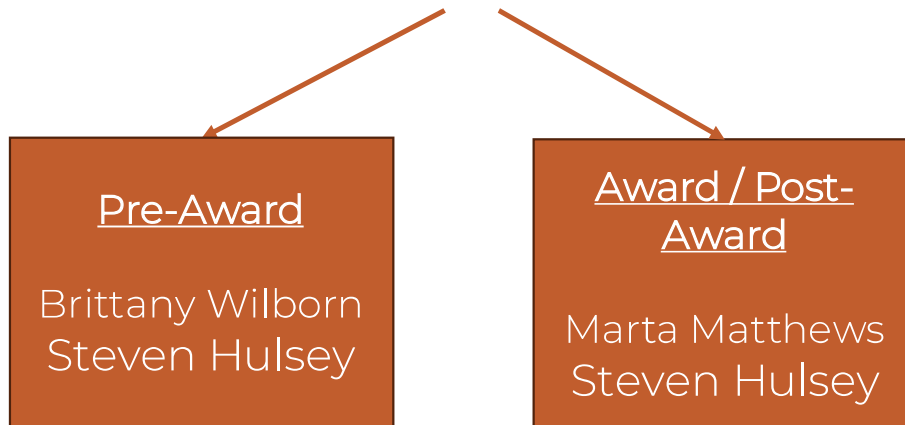
Some information pertains to both NCDOT projects as well as local projects where divisions or business units may be involved.

The presentation is meant to provide some resources and useful contacts for future use.



NCDOT Grants Management

Competitive Grants Committee
Division/Business Unit Sponsors
Grants Management Team



Federal Competitive Grants

**What kind of Grants are we
talking about?**



What is a Competitive Grant?

- Competitive grants are awarded to applicants through a merit-based process.
- Most eligible applicants are state, tribal, and local governments.
- Although “grant” implies that the funding is available up front, the program works on a cost-reimbursement basis.

RESOURCE: <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/dashboard>

What are some typical grant programs?

Grant Programs

- BUILD (Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development)¹
- MPDG², which includes RURAL, INFRA³, and MEGA⁴
- Culvert AOP (Aquatic Organism Passage)
- WCPP (Wildlife Crossings Pilot Project)
- Bridge or BIP (Bridge Investment Program)
- NSFLTP (National Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects)
- NSBP (National Scenic Byways Program)

¹ formerly RAISE (Rebuilding American infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity) and TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery)

² Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant

³ INFRA (the Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight & Highway Projects program)

⁴ MEGA Program (the National Infrastructure Project Assistance program)



Grants Pursuit (Pre-Award)

Grants Pursuit (Pre-Award)

Who is involved?

- *Grants Office*
- *Steering Committee*
- *Sponsor/Business Unit*

What is involved?

- *Registration*
- *Application Development*
- *Outreach*



PRE-AWARD

1

Applicant registers on [SAM.gov](#) and [Grants.gov](#) in advance* of application.
*registration is not immediate

2

Applicant searches for [USDOT grants](#) on Grants.gov where all USDOT grants are posted with a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) outlining program eligibility criteria and requirements.

3

Applicant applies for funding for a project that meets program requirements before the end of the application window.

4

USDOT reviews submitted applications and selects programs to award funding based on the stated criteria in the NOFO.

Grants Pursuit – Pre-Award

Registration

- *Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)*
- *Grants.gov registration to apply*
- *Local Governments and Tribal Organizations need to have their own registration*



Grants Pursuit – Pre-Award

Grants Steering Committee

- *Chief Engineer's Office*
- *Deputy Secretaries*
- *Strategic Planning & Programming*
- *Chief Operating Officer*
- *Technical Services*
- *Division of Planning & Programming*



Grants Pursuit – Pre-Award

Where to Find Grant Information?

- *Grants.gov*
- *Notices of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs)*

Best Practices:

- *Consider an engineering firm*
- *Coordination with NCDOT and Letters of Support*



Grants Pursuit – Pre-Award

Grants Outreach

- *Direct*
- *Indirect*
- *Guidance for Local Partners
(Coming Soon)*

SIPsgrants@ncdot.gov



ncdot.gov

Federal Grants Management at NCDOT

Grants Pursuit – Pre-Award

Grants Outreach (letters of support)

NCDOT utilizes Smartsheet application to collect and manage letters of support (LoS) requests. The link is:

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/23d0a43975444309806847fcfaaca982>



Grants Pursuit – Pre-Award

Evaluation of Project and Commitment

- Q Is there a clearly defined scope or does the project make sense?
- Q Who owns the facility being improved? Locally owned? State owned?
- Q If it is an NCDOT project, are there any other agencies involved?
- Q If the local government plans to apply and administer the project, do they have adequate staffing?
- Q Is there a good estimate of the project? Identified sources of funding including any local funds? Is the funding flexible as to when it can be used?
- Q What happens if the award is reduced from what was requested? Gap funding?
- Q What happens if the actual costs exceed the estimated budget? Where will the additional funding come from?
- Q Could a local project impact any of NCDOT's projects, if awarded?



Grants Management – Grants Pursuit

Grants Application Development (continued)

- *Review by Federal Agency*
- *Continuing Coordination*
- *Debriefing*



Grants Administration (Award)

Grants Administration (Award and Post-Award)

Who is involved?

- *Grants Office*
- *Sponsor/Business Unit*
- *FHWA Division Office*

What is involved?

- *Programming in STIP*
- *Agreement Execution*
- *Reporting*
- *Support/Data Management*



AWARD

5

USDOT notifies all applicants of the final award decisions, including application not selected for award.

Those not select may receive a letter of encouragement to apply in future application opportunities or seek alternative grant opportunities.

6

USDOT and **Applicant** negotiate and sign a grant project agreement and **USDOT** disburses funds.

7

Grantee implements the awarded project and adheres to all necessary conditions of the award.

Grants Administration – Award

Grants Award

- *Award Notification – Full Award*
- *Award Notification – Reduced Award*



Grants Administration – Award

Grants Award

Just because an award is announced,
work cannot begin on a project.



ncdot.gov

Federal Grants Management at NCDOT

Grants Administration – Award

Programming in the TIP and the STIP



Grants Administration – Award

- *Grants Agreements must be executed before work is performed**
- *Kickoff Meeting with FHWA and USDOT*

** Advance Construction (AC) can be used for early phases of the project.*



Grants Administration – Award

Grants Agreements

- *Terms and Conditions (T&C)*
- *Exhibits*



Grants Administration – Award

Grants Agreements (local governments)

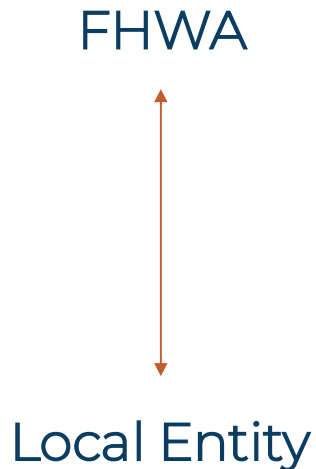
- *Direct Recipient*
- *Subrecipient*
- *NCDOT Administered*



Grants Administration – Award

Local Entities Receiving Federal Grants

1. Direct Recipient

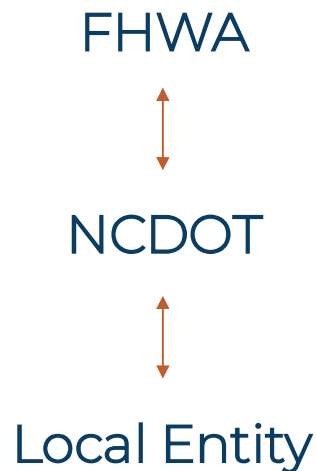


- NCDOT is not involved with administering funding or project oversight.
- Project may require an encroachment agreement when work is within NCDOT ROW.

Grants Administration – Award

Local Entities Receiving Federal Grants

2. Local as Sub-Recipient; NCDOT as Recipient

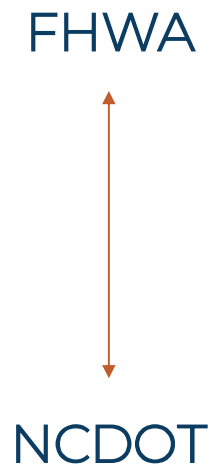


- NCDOT and Local Entity will both enter into an Agreement with FHWA.
- NCDOT and Local Entity will enter into a separate two-party agreement.

Grants Administration – Award

Local Entities Receiving Federal Grants

3. NCDOT as the Recipient



- NCDOT will deliver project on behalf of Local Entity
- NCDOT and FHWA will enter into the Federal Agreement
- NCDOT and Local Entity will enter into a two-party agreement to receive funding from Local Entity.

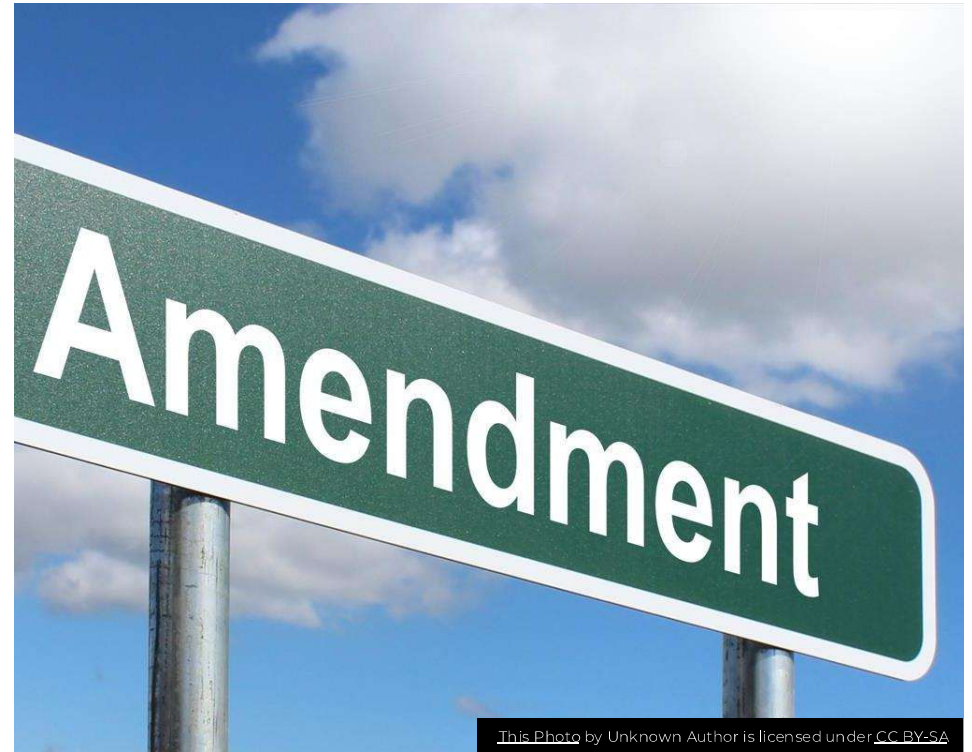
Grants Administration (Post - Award)



Grants Administration – Post Award

Changes to Executed Agreement

- *Scope*
- *Funding*
- *Schedule*



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Grants Administration – Post Award

Grants Reporting

- *Pre-quarterly*
- *Post-quarterly*

- ☐ Quarter 1 – January-March
- ☐ Quarter 2 – April-June
- ☐ Quarter 3 – July-September
- ☐ Quarter 4 – October-December



Grants Management – Grants Administration

Grants Reporting (pre-quarterly)

- *Cost Incurred but Not Invoiced*



Grants Management – Grants Administration

Grants Reporting (post-quarterly)

- *Status reporting*
- *Financial Reporting*



Grants Management – Grants Administration

Status Reporting

- *The Performance Progress Report or PPR*
- *Sections for:*
 - *The Federal Agency*
 - *The Recipient*
 - *Grant program and Project Name*
 - *Grant reporting period*
 - *Performance Narrative*
 - *Certifying Official*



Grants Management – Grants Administration (PPR)

1. Federal Agency and Organization Element to Which Report is Submitted	2. Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN)	3a. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)
FHWA	693JJ22440000RA06NC FBRG111	
		3b. EIN
4. Recipient Organization (Name and complete address including zip code)		
Recipient Organization Name: NC Department of Transportation		
Street1: 1 S. Wilmington Street		
Street2:		
City: Raleigh		
State: North Carolina		Zip Code: 27601-1429
5. Grant Program Name		6. Total Grant Award Amount
RAISE		\$ 10,731,645.00
7. Grant Project Name		8. Report Frequency
FLOW BETTER (Fixing Low Water Bridges for Emergency, Transportation, Technology, Equity, and Resilience)		Quarterly ☒
		Semiannual ☐
		Annual ☐
		Other ☐

Grants Management – Grants Administration (PPR)

12. Performance Narrative (Complete performance narrative fields 12a, 12b, 12c, 12d, 12e, and 12f as instructed in the PPR Instructions.)	
12a. Key accomplishments from last reporting period	Planning documents have been finalized for all 28 bridges, marking a major milestone in our pre-construction efforts. Twenty-six bridges have now advanced into the Right-of-Way (ROW) phase, with the remaining two 
12b. Identify and describe any scope, schedule, and/or budget concerns and summarize mitigation actions	Due to a federal pause that affected the authorization phase for Right-of-Way (ROW), we remain behind schedule on ROW acquisition. However, progress has been steady, and we remain optimistic about achieving construction authorization by September 2026.
12c. Special events	None.
12d. NEPA approval date(s)	June 30, 2025
12e. Construction Grant–Substantial completion and open to traffic date(s)	September 30, 2030
12f. Non-Construction Grant–Completion date	

Grants Management – Grants Administration (PPR)

13. Certification: I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that this report is correct and complete for performance of activities for the purposes set forth in the award documents.	
13a. Typed or Printed Name and Title of Authorized Certifying Official	13c. Telephone (area code and number)
Steven Hulse, PE	
Project Manager	13d. Email Address
	ext-shulse@ncdot.gov
13b. Signature of Authorized Certifying Official	13e. Date Report Submitted (month, day, year)
	10/15/2025
	14. Agency use only

Grants Management – Grants Administration

Grants Reporting (post-quarterly)

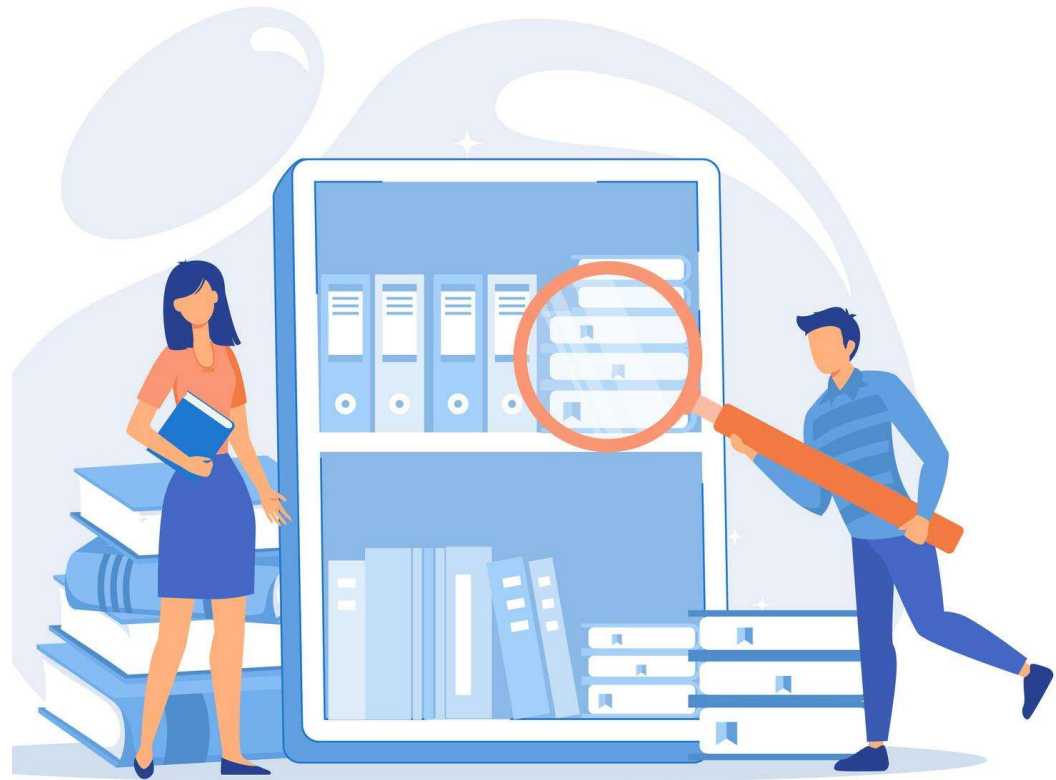
- *Reporting dates*
 - *Q1 (January – March), due April 20th*
 - *Q2 (April – June), due July 20th*

- *Reporting Assistance*



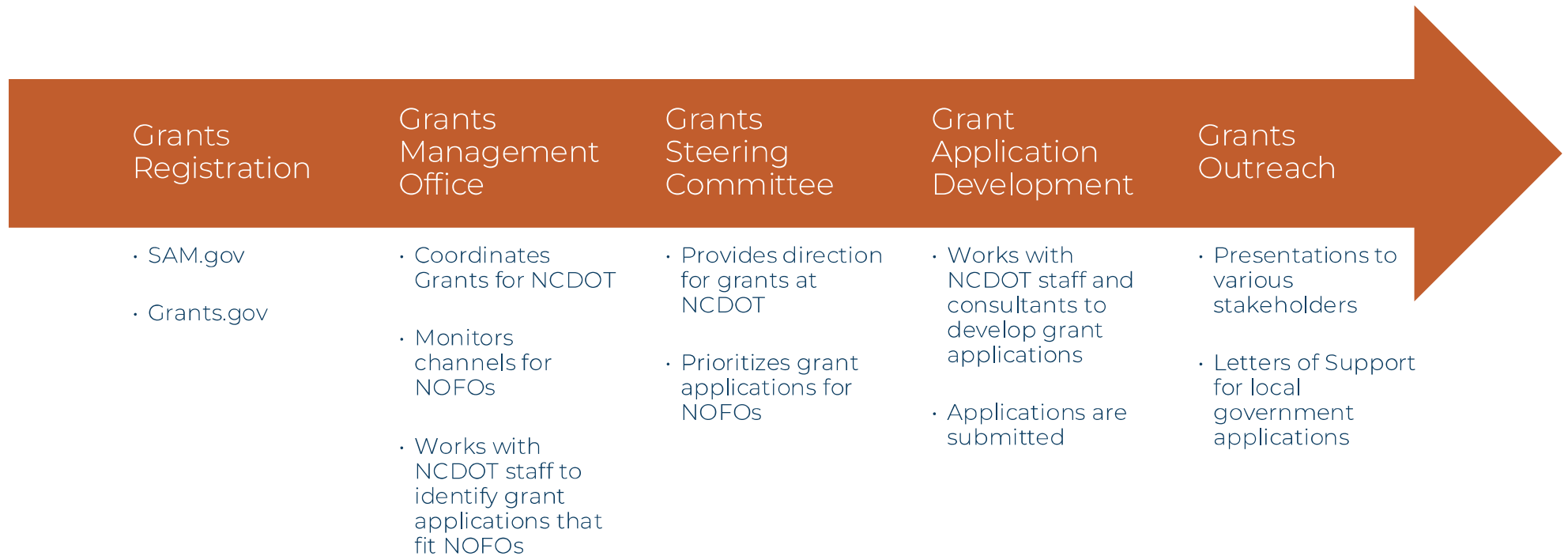
Grants Management – Grants Administration

Grants Support/Data Management

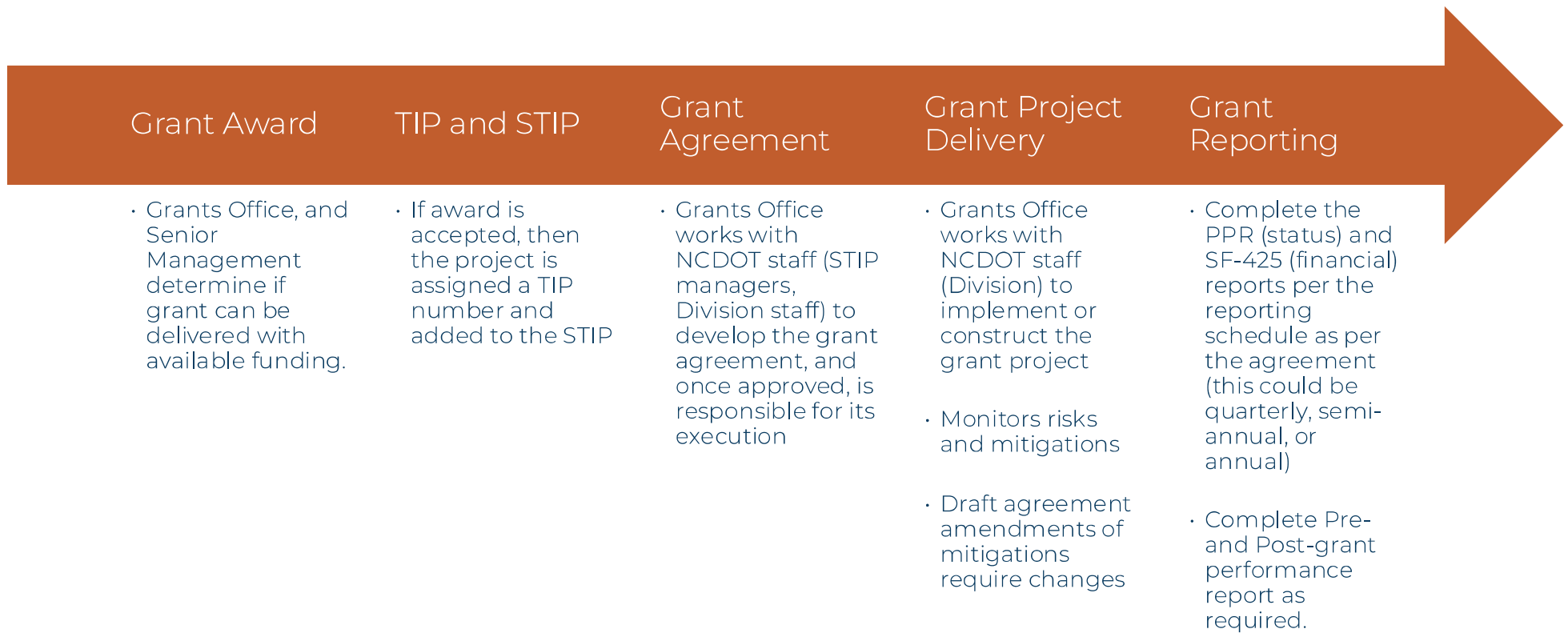


Grants Management Summary

Federal Grants Management Summary – Grants Pursuit (Pre-Award)



Federal Grants Management Summary – Grants Administration (Award and Post-Award)

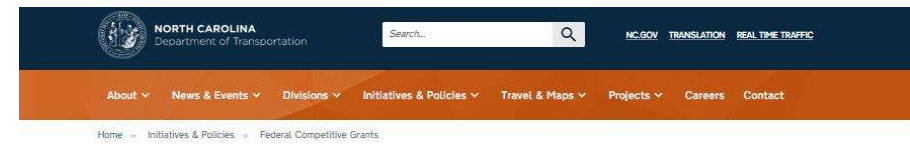


Federal Competitive Grants – NCDOT Webpage

- *Up-to-date information*
- *Grant application resources*
- *Guidance on engaging with NCDOT*

Website Features

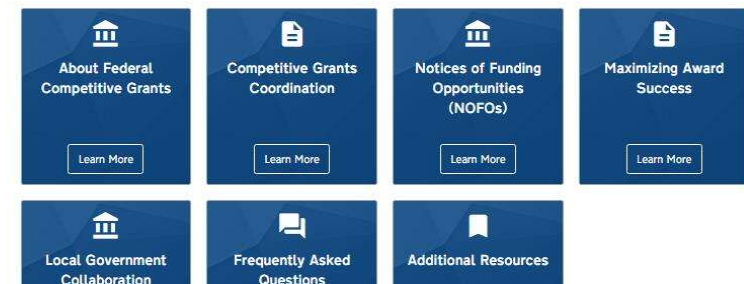
- *About Federal Competitive Grants*
- *Competitive Grant Coordination – STIP unit and LPMO*
- *Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs)*
- *NCDOT Letter of Support Request Form*
- *Local Government Collaboration*
- *FAQs*
- *Links to Additional Resources*



Federal Competitive Grants



Grant Application Support



Contact Us

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For all grant-related inquiries, please contact us at SIPGrants@ncdot.gov.

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Questions?

Thank you!
