

An Overview of the Call For Submissions Process

Periodically the Structure Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) and the Geotechnical Technical Advisory Panel (GTAP) in the Department request proposals for research contracts to address their research needs. These requests are presented as Calls For Submissions (CFS). Public colleges and universities and government agencies are eligible to submit research proposals (RP) in response to a CFS. Private entities interested in participating in this research may not do so directly but may collaborate with public institutions to address this research. Public institutions may subcontract with private entities subject to certain conditions and limitations.

The Department's mission is improving mobility across California. In the pursuit of this mission the Department conducts research as needed to make improvements. Research in the Department is guided by a number of oversight and implementation committees. Information about the STAP, GTAP, Program Steering Committees (PSC) and the Department's Research and Deployment Steering Committee (RDSC) can be found in other documents.

The research topics or subject areas for STAP and GTAP research generally fall into the area of transportation structures and geotechnical systems. A CFS typically shows the research topics of current interest. This research is intended to address the specific needs of the STAP and GTAP and the following broad Department goals:

- **Safety:** Provide the safest transportation system in the nation for users and workers.
- **Mobility:** Optimize transportation system capacity and provide dependable travel times.
- **Delivery:** Improve delivery of transportation projects and services.
- **Flexibility:** Provide mobility choices through strategic partnerships.
- **Stewardship:** Preserve and enhance California's resources and investments.

Parties interested in performing research pursuant to a CFS will need to prepare and submit RP. The STAP and GTAP use the website (<http://www.dot.ca.gov/rpm>) to manage the CFS and the submission of RP. This website also provides documents that can help in preparing RP and understanding the development of research projects in the Department. Some of the significant events in this development process are:

- Assessment of current research needs by the STAP and GTAP
- Solicitation of new topics for future research from the public and internal sources
- Evaluation of new topics for future research
- STAP and GTAP recommend a limited number of topics for future research
- Recommended topics are elaborated and prepared for solicitation of RPs
- CFS is issued soliciting RP for the prepared research topics
- Parties interested in conducting research prepare their RP for each topic they chose
- Potential researchers submit their completed RPs by the due date shown in the CFS

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- RP for each topic are evaluated against each other to ascertain the best approach
- STAP, GTAP, PSC, and the RDSC recommend the best RP for advancement to 1 or more contracts
- Research contracts are negotiated and prepared
- Contracts are executed and research begins.
- Research is conducted and monitored, milestones met, intermediate products delivered, and interim reports prepared
- Research concludes and the final report is prepared.

The CFS identifies a number of research topics that address the STAP and GTAP needs. Neither the topics themselves nor the CFS specify how the research should be conducted: that is the purpose of the RP. In general the RP should indicate the methods, processes, and theoretical basis for the proposed research. The most responsive RP focus on the implementation of the research results towards the improvement of transportation systems in California. In order to promote synergy among diverse research projects, respondents should consider how their RP could be integrated with other research topics. Collaboration among academic disciplines and research institutions is encouraged in order to promote and integrate diverse research capabilities and perspectives.

During the preparation of RP questions about the CFS process and the research topics may arise. These questions can be posted to the website where the responses will also be shown. The questions and responses will be available to the public on the website but the names of those posting questions will be withheld from the public.

All the RP received will be evaluated by the STAP, GTAP, PSCs, and the RDSC. These committees will make the final selection of those RP that will proceed towards contract. The RP will be evaluated using these general criteria:

- **Organization:** Does the RP adhere to the page limits and outline? Is the RP well written?
- **Research Plan:** Is a comprehensive literature search completed? Are the plans, methods, techniques and procedures feasible, clear, valid, adequately referenced, and state-of-the-art?
- **Research Objective:** Are the stated objectives, scope and motivation of the RP clear, valid, and logical? Does the RP address the topic well to meet the Department's goals?
- **Research Results:** When will the expected product(s) of the research be available? Are they likely to be useful, practical, and deployable?
- **Qualifications:** Are the qualifications, capabilities, and experience of the proposed lead researcher and other key personnel sufficient to achieve the proposed objectives? Is the proposed facility adequate for the work?
- **Budget:** Does the budget reflect the actual needs of the proposed work? Have the requests for personnel, equipment, supplies, etc. been fully justified? Have cooperative features, partnerships and subcontracts been fully identified?

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The Department retains the right to disregard minor deviations from the requirements and may, to facilitate the evaluations, request supplemental information or clarifications from those submitting RP. During its evaluations or following its final selections the Department may elect to negotiate with any respondent for the details of any proposed contract agreement that will implement an RP. Any contract agreement as a result of this CFS will be subject to all necessary State, Federal and Agency approvals. If an agreement cannot be reached, negotiations will cease and no contractual agreement written or implied will exist. The Department will not reimburse submitting individuals or organizations for any costs incurred in the preparation or submission of RP or for any costs associated with the negotiation process.

Any CFS shall not commit the Department to negotiate and execute any contract agreement with any respondent. The Department may reject any or all RP submitted. The Department reserves the right to accept RP that, in the sole judgment of the Department, are in the best interests of the State. The Department reserves the right to modify, amend, or cancel, in part or in its entirety, any CFS.

The RP received by the Department will be read and discussed and evaluated by STAP, GTAP, PSC, and RDSC members in the Department. RP that are not selected will not be shared with the public or used for purposes not pertaining to this CFS process. Information about RP that are selected for contract will not be released until a contract is in place.