

Florida Commission for the



**Transportation
Disadvantaged**

**Innovative Service
Development Grant Program
Fiscal Year 2025-2026**

March 27, 2025



Webinar Topics

- Overview of the ISD Grant Program
- Questions to Consider for Project Ideas
- Overview of Application and Review Process
- Webinar Participant Feedback Session

Webinar Rules

- This is for Community Transportation Coordinators (CTCs) and other parties interested in developing an ISD project.
- This webinar is being recorded and will be posted on the CTD website.
- All audio and phone lines are muted.
- Webinar participants should use chat box to submit questions/comments.
- CTD will only respond to feedback regarding the ISD Grant program.



Overview of the ISD Grant Program

Funding Background

2016-2019, CTD awarded approximately \$2 million (Mobility Enhancement Grant).

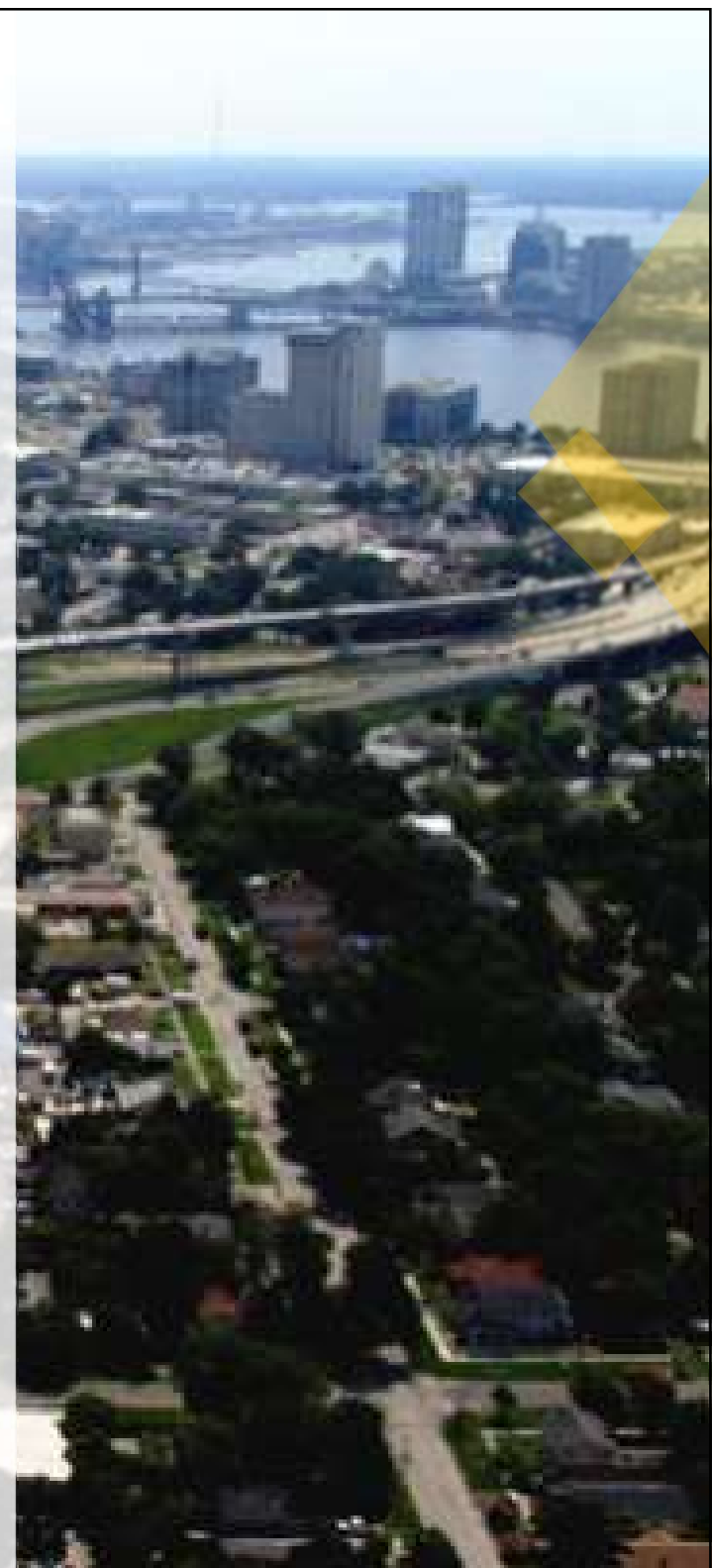
2019 Legislature appropriated \$10M to ISD Grant through Multi-Use Corridors of Regional Economic Significance (M-CORES).

M-CORES funding was repealed in 2021 (unfunded in FY21-22).

2022 Legislature appropriated \$4M for FY22-23, \$6M for FY23-24 and \$3M for FY24-25.

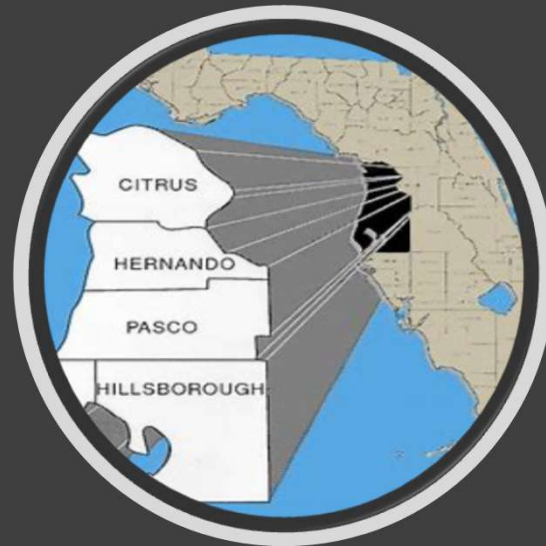
CTD policy approved December 11, 2023, limits projects for consideration for no more than 4 years.

Governor's budget recommends \$3M for FY25-26.



ISD Grant Goals

- 1) Increase a TD person's access to daily activities which could include extending service hours or serving an underserved TD population;
- 2) Enhance cross-county mobility; or
- 3) Reduce difficulty for TD riders accessing the fixed route system, if available in the community.





Innovation is:

*"Turning an idea into a solution
that adds value
from a customer's perspective"*

Nick Skillicorn

@improvides

idea to value.com



Examples of “Innovative” Services

Including the use of TNCs and other non-traditional providers to reduce riders’ wait and travel times with paratransit services.

Expanding TD services (weekends/after hours, cross-county trips) increases riders’ access to certain critical activities.

Serving a segment of the TD population (low-income, developmental disabilities) addresses an unmet need.

Providing “first mile/last mile” and fixed route connector options reduces demand/costs of paratransit services.

Who Can Participate in the Program?

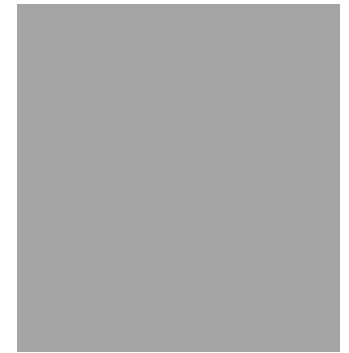
CTCs (defined in 427.011 FS) are only eligible to apply as a “direct grant recipient.”

The use of “non-traditional” transportation (subcontract) providers is encouraged, if available and appropriate.

Only one CTC can apply as a “direct recipient” of a multi-service area project, but other CTCs can be “partners.”

“Partners” can also include colleges, human service agencies, businesses, etc.

Riders must be determined “TD eligible” prior to being served by the project.





Requirements

A project can include multiple ISD Grant goals but should have only one purpose.

A project serving a single service area can be awarded up to \$750,000.

A project serving multiple service areas can be awarded up to \$1.5M.

Only one grant can be awarded per service area.

All projects must include a 10% local match.

Funds shall only be used for the reimbursement of trips to TD eligible riders (NOT capital equipment).



Other Requirements

All proposals for FY25-26 must be submitted to CTD by 11:59pm (Eastern Time) on May 12, 2025!

Funding is contingent on Legislative appropriation and Governor's approval.

Services can be provided no earlier than July 1, 2025.

Grantees must submit monthly invoices to CTD for reimbursement.

Funding Limitations to Consider

- Funding will be tight!
- Current projects will receive first consideration.
- A different funding amount other than what was requested may be recommended.
- CTD will analyze invoice data (both ISD and T&E Grants) to help with determining need.



Project Time Limits

- CTD policy limits projects to a maximum of 4 years for consideration of ISD funding.
- Projects that adjust or expand services from year-to-year may not be considered new projects.
- Grant recipients with expired funding can propose new project.





CTD Technical Assistance

Limited CTD communications with applicants, except as provided below:

- Training webinar for guidance on developing project proposals and meeting program criteria.
- Submit written questions to FLCTDGrantApps@dot.state.fl.us. Answers will be posted on CTD website.
- “Early Bird” applications to receive CTD feedback on proposals prior to final submission deadline.

Application and Approval Timeline

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| March 17, 2025 | Release of Grant Program Manual and Application |
| March 27, 2025 | ISD Grant Program Information Webinar |
| April 11, 2025 | Deadline to Submit “Early Bird” Applications |
| April 28, 2025 | Deadline for CTD to Provide “Early Bird” Feedback |
| May 2, 2025 | End of 2025 Legislative Session |
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Things to Consider for Project Ideas



Start with the Customers' Perspective

- What transportation barriers inhibit an individual's access to work, health care, social-recreation, etc.?
- Where does the local TD program fall short in meeting these needs?
- What evidence can be gathered to demonstrate how a project can address these "unmet needs?"
- How would the customer perceive the "value" of the new service (e.g., greater mobility, convenience, customer satisfaction, etc.)?





Ideas + Collaboration = Grant Funding

Other Questions to Consider

- Who are the key stakeholders that can be “partners” in the project?
- How can the partner(s) coordinate services for the customers of the project?
- Can the project utilize non-traditional providers, such as TNCs or taxis?
- What ideas are being tested? How can data verify or validate whether the ideas work?
- If the project succeeds, how could the idea(s) be incorporated with other TD services?



Develop a Lab Mentality

Funding intended to test new services that could become a part of a system's day-to-day operations.

Projects may take longer than 12 months to determine whether services fulfilled ISD Grant goals.

Grant recipients may be requested to provide at least one presentation to the Commission, including progress of project goals, any challenges with implementation, rider survey results, etc.

Thinking Beyond the Lab: Sustainability

It is important to plan for sustainability to continue project (beyond ISD funding).

Applicants should describe any planning efforts or actions taken in this regard.

Evaluating the outcomes (and whether they can be sustained) is the end goal – not necessarily continuing the project as proposed.





Applications

Grants

Overview of Application and Review Process

APPLYING FOR A GRANT



Application Instructions

Carefully review entire Grant Manual – CTD **shall not** accept applications incomplete or in a different format.

Clearly identify the service area(s), key staff, project start date, funding request (with local match).

Include detailed description in Project Scope, evidence of need, and how the services will support the ISD Goals.

Current projects will be requested to provide information on status of progress of projects, including any lessons learned.

Proposals must be **no more than** 20 pages long, including supporting documents.

Application Instructions (cont.)

Describe how CTCs may coordinate services within a regional project (i.e., eligibility, billing, etc.).

If project includes partnerships, include description of roles, contributions, etc.

If applicable, describe how a TNC or non-traditional provider will enhance the service quality, efficiency, cost, etc.

Explain any expected delays in services, such as procurement efforts.



**Grant
Funding
Opportunities**



Application Instructions (cont.)

Provide a detailed expense budget to support funding request.

Propose service rates and methodology used to determine (rate model).

Attach any letters of support, including county board resolutions.

Proposals serving multiple service areas (regional) can only be submitted by one applicant (i.e., CTC).

CTCs of an approved multi-county service area cannot request more than \$750,000, unless project expands its service area.

Sample Expense Budget Breakout

PROPOSED PROJECT EXPENSE BUDGET (EXAMPLE)

| EXPENSE SOURCES | |
|--|----|
| Labor | \$ |
| Fringe Benefits | |
| Services | |
| Materials and Supplies | |
| Utilities | |
| Casualty and Liability | |
| Taxes | |
| Purchased Transportation | |
| Miscellaneous <i>(Identify costs included in this line item)</i> | |
| Leases and Rentals | |
| Allocated Indirect Cost | |
| <i>Include any other expense items needed</i> | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Total Budget | \$ |

Expense items listed in table above may not cover all project expenses. CTC may identify additional expense items not identified to get total project budget.



“Early Bird” Reminders

“Early Bird” submissions are due April 11, 2025.

Feedback will be provided no later than April 28, 2025.

Projects who have submitted an Early Bird Application **MUST** resubmit their applications!

Words of Advice

Project scope should be specific and to the point.

- Too much unnecessary information – difficult to determine purpose and objectives of project or what is being tested.

Follow application format and complete all sections.

- Application was incomplete and did not follow format, which cannot be accepted.

Proofread and check math on rates, budgets, trips estimates, etc. Include outsiders to assist in review process.

- Misspelled words, inconsistent and incorrect calculations including budget errors and trip estimates.

Know your audience – describe technical terms and acronyms at least once in the scope.

- Too many acronyms or terms unknown to reviewer.

Clearly describes how the project will offer something new and innovative that adds value to the rider.

- Project appears to supplement existing services (e.g., Trip & Equipment (T&E) Grant invoice data).

If project serves specific group (e.g., IDD), describe how partnering agencies will assist in determining eligibility.

- Unclear eligibility determination, particularly for a subset of TD population.

Example Statements

Unclear: “The project will maximize the user interface by providing point-to-point, seamless services.”

Clearer: “The project will improve the rider’s experience by reducing travel time by less than 30 minutes per trip.”

Unclear: “We will provide trips for veterans to access the VA hospital.”

Clearer: “We will provide approximately 200 trips for 20 TD eligible veterans to access the VA hospital in Makam County, available Monday through Friday, 5am – 7pm.”

Current Year Projects

- Projects re-applying should be careful when copying from previous year's proposal!
- Current year projects **must** include information on current year outcomes/progress.
 - Provide an update on the status of the goals previously stated in current ISD grant cycle. Have you been able to provide service?
 - Challenges that you've had, and the lessons learned from them.
- If applicant proposes changes to current year project (i.e., trip estimates, eligibility, etc.), please explain why.
 - What makes these changes innovative?
 - How do they further the original goal(s) of the project?
 - Why does this change need to happen?

Evaluation

Applications will be reviewed based on the “evaluation criteria” provided within the Grant Manual.

CTD will examine invoice data from both T&E and ISD Grants as part of the evaluation process.

Project recommendations will be included in CTD meeting packet for the June 2025 business meeting.

Funding contingent on Legislative/Governor final approval.



Proposal A: Cross-County

Key Claims

- Support cross-county trips within 3-county region.
- TDSPs in each service area reflect the need for cross-county services.
- Each CTC only provides services within their county.
- ISD project would enhance regional mobility.
- Goal to provide XXX cross-county trips to XX TD eligibility rider during grant period.

Evaluation

- Supports two ISD goals.
- Cites county stats in evidence of need.
- T&E invoice data shows trips are limited to each individual service area/county.
- Proposal outlines goals with new funding.
- Not previously funded under ISD Grant (new project).
- All required elements were provided (budget, rates, etc.).

Proposal B: Rural TD Trips

Key Claims

- Support on-demand TD services in rural county.
- CTC currently requires 3-day advance scheduling for trips.
- Goal is to provide 50 on-demand trips per month.

Evaluation

- Does not include evidence of need (est. TD rural residents, trip purposes, etc.).
- Provides estimated trip count, but unclear how they arrived at that claim.
- No budget was included.

Proposal C: Job Training

Key Claims

- Continue ISD project providing job training/employment trips.
- Add use of TNCs to improve on-time performance by 5%.
- Expand services for students through local college partner.
- Survey found 50 students would benefit from service.
- Goal to provide 20,750 employment trips next year with ISD funding.

Evaluation

- Supports one ISD goal, with expanded access to students.
- Includes survey data to expand services for students.
- Does not include data on current on-time performance.
- ISD data indicate over 10,000 trips (49% of funding expended) during first six months of the project.
- Unclear how TNC trips would be arranged next year.

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Webinar Participant Q & A Session

