



**Request for Proposals:** Developing a near-miss reporting system for roadside responders

**Topic Area:** Roadway Systems & Drivers

**Deadline:** Thursday, October 27, 2022, 5 PM EDT

### **Background**

Towing and service providers are at risk of being struck by passing motorists while they are working at the roadside. However, at present, efforts to protect this vulnerable group of road users are limited by a lack of comprehensive, high-quality data regarding the incidence and details of these crashes.

In 2021, the AAA Foundation convened a panel of experts to discuss constraints and identify ways to improve data about the safety of incident response and emergency services personnel ([Research Brief](#)). During the discussion, data from near-miss incidents were highlighted as a major gap in our understanding of roadside responder safety. Such information, if available, could complement information about the crashes that do happen with information about risky events that fortunately do not lead to crashes or subsequent injuries and fatalities. This can further help in understanding steps successfully taken to prevent the occurrence of crashes and injuries. However, to implement a system that gathers data regarding near-miss incidents in a meaningful way requires buy-in by many stakeholders, as well as active participation from the personnel working in the field.

### **Objectives**

This research aims to identify the elements needed for a successful near-miss reporting system for roadside responders, informed by the experiences of towing operations and other high-risk industries (e.g., aviation, firefighting, and medicine) that have deployed or attempted to deploy such systems. As envisioned, the research would review and document existing reporting systems. Experiences of stakeholders in these domains, gathered through interviews, surveys, or other approaches, would be leveraged to gauge and document the requisite elements of a near-miss reporting system, as well as barriers or challenges, and opportunities to augment existing systems. These efforts can be further complemented by input and feedback from the end users (i.e., those reporting incidents). While this RFP is grounded in towing operations, proposals can also consider other roadside responders as well (e.g., EMS, police, fire, etc.), provided that data needs, barriers, and challenges can be easily delineated across these different classes of workers.

### **Methods**

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety envisions that the objectives of this research could be met through multiple methods utilizing a variety of research tools, including but not limited to literature review and environmental scans, interviews, surveys, and/or focus groups with different stakeholders and end users. The AAA Foundation envisions that a project of the intended scale would likely take approximately 12 months to complete.

### **Suggestions for Proposal Content**

Each year, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety solicits proposals on traffic safety topics related to one or more of its four focus areas (Emerging Technologies; Vulnerable Road User; Driver Behavior &

Performance; and Roadway Systems & Drivers). Proposals will be evaluated based on criteria described below. Funding for selected proposals will be available beginning in April 2023. The body of your proposal should be no longer than five (5) pages (not including title page, CVs, appendices, or any budget information) and should contain the sections listed below. Failure to follow these instructions may result in the proposal being disqualified.

1. Title page:

- Title of the proposal.
- Names and affiliations of all investigators.
- Address, telephone number, and email of the primary investigator and/or the individual to whom correspondence regarding the proposal is to be addressed.
- An abstract, not exceeding 300 words.

2. Objectives

3. Approach:

Proposals should provide detailed description of the proposed project methods, the expected results, and potential limitations. When applicable, proposals must describe how subjects or respondents will be identified and recruited.

4. Timeline and supporting environment:

Describe the project timeline, where the activities/program(s) will take place, and what facilities and resources will be used (if applicable). Please present all timelines in terms of calendar year and month. For planning purposes, assume an April 1, 2023 start date and an end date of March 31, 2024 (or whatever appropriate end date, in cases of longer, multi-year project proposals). Note that actual dates will be determined at the contract agreement stage.

5. Evaluation of project process and deliverables:

Describe how specific objectives and project outcomes will be measured and evaluated.

Describe anticipated deliverables including final report(s), key meetings, etc. Note the final deliverable must include a complete report that fully describes the research effort and results, intended for publication on AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety's website.

6. Project budget request and indirect costs rates:

The AAA Foundation has an annual budget of a few million dollars to fund all projects. Only proposals of high quality and significance will be awarded.

Please include a detailed budget including indirect costs. Your proposal may provide multiple options for study designs that differ in scale and budget.

Please note that, for awarded contracts, invoices should be based on actual expenses linked to project deliverables. Progress reports will be required. All travel request line items should be documented and justified. Conference travel may or may not be justifiable depending on the purpose and scope of work.

The AAA Foundation is a charitable entity and is not committed to matching the indirect cost rates of the U.S. government or other entities. However, since the AAA Foundation has an important relationship with many universities and organizations to perform valuable projects, including (but not limited to) discovery research and intervention development/evaluation,

universities and organizations can request a limited amount of indirect costs. Current allowable rates are:

- 0% rate for government agencies, other private foundations, and for-profit organizations;
- Up to a 20% rate for U.S. universities, U.S. colleges; and
- Up to a 25% rate for non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Rates and limitations would be applied to both the primary applicant and any sub-grantees and subcontractors. Each respective organization may receive indirect costs up to the rate applicable to their organization. If a U.S. university is the primary contractor and includes an NGO as a subcontractor, the university can receive up to a 20% rate, while the NGO can receive up to a 25% rate for indirect costs. The rates provided above are the maximum rates allowed under the AAA Foundation's policy. A contractor with an actual indirect cost rate lower than the maximum rate provided above should not increase the funding request to the maximum allowed.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

Proposals are assessed based on three criteria: (1) *innovation*, (2) *approach*, and (3) *team experience and supporting research environment*. Each criterion will be weighted (a proposal can be scored a maximum of 100 points). The following briefly describes some of the assessment questions posed for each criterion and the respective weight.

*Criterion 1: Innovation* (weight 1-20 points):

Does the applicant propose novel theoretical concepts, methods, instrumentation, or interventions? Is the proposed work expected to have impact on progress in the relevant fields and/or enhance programmatic initiatives?

*Criterion 2: Approach* (weight 1-60 points):

Does the application clearly respond to the RFP request (i.e., provide a concise background of the problem or area to be studied, clearly state the objective(s), etc.)? Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well reasoned, technically sound, and appropriate to accomplish the objective(s) of the project? Have the investigators presented strategies to ensure an unbiased approach, as appropriate for the work proposed? Are potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success presented? Is there appropriate discussion of the possible/potential results, what they may mean and how they will affect further work? Is the estimated work duration adequate to complete the work scope?

*Criterion 3: Team Experience and Supporting Environment* (weight 1-20 points):

Are the Principal Investigators (PIs) and proposed personnel well suited to the project? If the project is collaborative, do they have complementary and integrated expertise? Does the team have the necessary skills and experience? Has the applicant demonstrated an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced the field? Are the institutional support, equipment, and other physical resources available to project personnel adequate for the project proposed?

Project budget requests will be assessed to determine whether they are appropriate for the work proposed. As noted above, a proposal may include multiple options for study designs that differ in scale and budget.

### **Proposal Format**

Your proposal must meet the following formatting requirements:

- Use standard letter-sized page (8.5 x 11 inch), with at least one-inch margins on all sides.
- All text should be single-spaced and aligned to the left, in 12-point Arial font.
- Do not use any headers or footers, with the exception of page numbers.
- Do not use footnotes or endnotes.
- The body of the proposal (excluding title page, CVs, charts, appendices, and budget material) must not exceed five (5) pages.
- Please submit the proposal as a PDF.

### **Proposal Submission**

**Deadline: Thursday, October 27, 2022, 5:00 PM EDT.**

**No proposals will be accepted after the date and time stated above.**

Submit your proposal electronically to [RFP@aaafoundation.org](mailto:RFP@aaafoundation.org)

Please fill the subject line with “2022 Fall RFP Proposal.”

When sending your proposal to the AAA Foundation, please give your electronic files names that can help identify them. File names that include the last name of the principal investigator and a shortened title are preferred, such as:

Smith-NoviceDriverSupervisedPracticeHours.pdf

Smith-Appendix.pdf

Please do not use generic file names such as Proposal.pdf or AAAFTS\_Proposal.pdf.

### **Other Suggestions**

The body of the proposal should be self-contained; it should be able to be understood by a reviewer without any supporting appendices.

Those who will be reviewing your proposal are knowledgeable about most major traffic safety topics. It is important that you demonstrate awareness and understanding of literature and ongoing research most relevant to your proposal; however, it is not necessary to provide an exhaustive review or cite statistics to convince reviewers that traffic safety (in general) is important. It is far more important for you to describe in detail what questions your proposal seeks to answer, how your project will accomplish tasks in a timely manner, what methods you will use, and how the results of your study will be used to achieve real-world improvements in traffic safety.

### **Questions**

An FAQ document is available at this [link](#), which includes common questions from previous years.

If you have other questions, please email them to [RFP@aaafoundation.org](mailto:RFP@aaafoundation.org) and fill the subject line “Questions.” AAA Foundation will accept questions until 5:00 PM EDT, September 22, 2022. Answers to these questions will be posted on the AAA Foundation website no later than 5:00 PM EDT September 29, 2022.

### **About the Sponsor**

Established in 1947 by the American Automobile Association, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety is an independent, publicly funded 501(c)(3) charitable research and education organization dedicated to saving lives by preventing traffic crashes and reducing injuries. The Foundation’s mission is to

prevent traffic deaths and injuries by conducting research into their causes and by educating the public about strategies to prevent crashes and reduce injuries when they occur. Additional information about the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety can be found at [www.aaafoundation.org](http://www.aaafoundation.org).