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FAQs | AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety Request for Proposals

QUESTION	RESPONSE
General: Eligibility and Proposal Planning	
Can proposals include elements that go beyond the RFP, such as expansions in scope, follow-up phases, or other content developed based on insights from the research?	Proposals may include an expanded scope or optional add-ons; however, they will be reviewed according to their adequacy in addressing the needs of the RFP.
We would appreciate clarification of what you mean by "independent research team."	The AAA Foundation is seeking research teams who can provide objective and impartial research.
I would like to ask whether researchers from other countries are eligible to submit applications.	Eligibility is open to any organizations qualified to do the work. However, for practical considerations, an organization outside of the U.S. should detail how regular project status meetings with AAA Foundation staff will take place.
Can our team compete for multiple RFPs and obtain funding for both if both scored highly? These studies would be run in different research samples and would be functionally independent.	Teams are welcome to apply to multiple RFP topics. Award selection for one topic is made independently of that for other topics.
Can the investigators (e.g., a university) conduct the research in partnership with an auto insurance company for the purposes of recruiting a large national sample of drivers?	Investigators are welcome to partner with any organization that can help achieve the project aims. Note that, in the case of insurance companies as well as other for-profit entities, assurances will need to be made concerning the use and/or release of proprietary data.

Does the AAA Foundation have any guidance with regards to which approach would be considered more responsive?	AAA Foundation is unable to provide any feedback on potential project ideas or scope. Applicants are encouraged to propose work (the approach and scale) that they believe will meet the objectives of the RFP.
Do you have a link that shows past projects that were funded?	Technical reports or research briefs for past (completed) projects are available on the AAA Foundation website.
General: Administrative Items	
I have an idea for a new area of study for the future. How does this process work?	The AAA Foundation has its own internal solicitation process for research ideas. As of now, we are not accepting unsolicited research ideas.
General: Project Duration	
We were wondering about the typical size, number, and duration of the awards?	Duration periods depend on the scope of the project. See individual RFPs for suggested duration periods. Historically, projects have ranged from a few hundred thousand dollars to several million for multi-year studies.
Could the project timeline extend beyond 15 months – perhaps up to 2 years?	Yes. See individual RFPs for suggested duration periods. The AAA Foundation will consider alternative project schedules with justification.
What is the timeline of the proposal review process?	Notifications on proposals selected for funding are expected to go out approximately 6 months from the end of each RFP cycle.
General: Budget Range	
Will each topic potentially be awarded to multiple teams?	Only high-quality proposals will be funded. If we do not find a proposal in a topic area that has merit, it will not be a funded area. If more than one application has merit, then multiple proposals could be awarded, pending fund availability.

What is the anticipated budget for each topic?	Project budgets depend on the scope of the study. Historically, projects have ranged from a few hundred thousand dollars to several million for multi-year studies.
Do you have a budget range in mind for this project?	It depends on the scope and duration of the project proposed. Historically, projects have ranged from a few hundred thousand dollars to several million for multi-year studies.
Is there a budget ceiling? If so, what is that ceiling?	Historically, projects have ranged from a few hundred thousand dollars to several million for multi-year studies depending on the project scope and duration.
General: Budgeting	
Can funds be used to support graduate students?	It is up to the applicant to determine how funding will be allocated on a project. The cost proposal should indicate who will be working on the study and what their contributions will be. The AAA Foundation will only fund projects with justified staffing roles.
If we are proposing a project that will take 18 months, what should we suggest as our end date for timeline and budgetary purposes?	For budgeting purposes, assume April start dates for RFPs that are in our fall cycles and October start dates for RFPs that are in our spring cycles.
Given the prohibition on indirect costs for for-profit organizations, please clarify whether AAA Foundation would be willing to consider a firm fixed price proposal from a for-profit organization that would allow the organization to invoice and be paid in lump sum amounts without breaking down the budget by labor, overhead, profit, and direct costs.	The AAA Foundation will promptly pay invoices of contracted projects based on tasks performed.

Is there a template or standard format for reporting budget?	There is no required template for budget submissions during the proposal process. However, the budget must clearly indicate all the cost elements of the project including but not limited to: direct labor, equipment and materials, travel, and miscellaneous expenses, as well as indirect costs.
Would you please provide a description of factors that qualify an organization as a non-governmental agency (NGO)?	There is no standard or legal definition of "non-governmental organization" (NGO). However, the term typically applies to an organization that is voluntary, is operated on a non-profit basis, has a charitable, humanitarian, social, or other non-commercial purpose, and is independent of government control or influence (although it may receive some government funding).
What are allowable indirect costs? For example, is fringe allowable when other indirect costs are not?	The RFP does not limit or restrict the types of indirect costs an organization may include in its proposal. The RFP only limits the rates at which indirect costs are allowed (0% for government agencies, 20% for universities, etc.).
Are there any special provisions or considerations associated with small businesses that are responding to these RFPs?	It is the capability, not the size, of the responding organization that will be considered by the AAA Foundation in evaluating proposals.
RFP states up to a 20% rate for universities. Could you please clarify if this is applicable to all costs or not? Could you please clarify on what costs the university can charge indirect costs?	Direct costs include items such as compensating the researchers for time spent on the project, travel costs, rental of equipment used, etc. Indirect costs include overhead such as administrative expenses, depreciation, and insurance.
Is an officer's overtime rate considered an indirect cost which is not allowed or would it be considered a direct cost to the project?	Personnel who are contributing to a project of the AAA Foundation would be considered as direct cost.

<p>Do you allow firm-fixed-price contracts from for-profit organizations based on a lump sum total budget? Or do you require a detailed breakdown of all costs for proposal budgets and project invoices? If so, what is your detailed budget template?</p>	<p>For proposals that are selected for funding, the AAA Foundation will consider various contract types that are appropriate and reasonable. There is no required template for budget submissions during the proposal process. However, the budget should clearly indicate all the cost elements of the project.</p>
General: CVs, Bibliographies, and other Attachments	
<p>Is there a limit to the number of pages we can include in each investigators' CV? Previous AAA Foundation RFPs have asked for only 1-page CVs but this one did not specify.</p>	<p>There is no limit to the number of pages per CV. However, for practicality, we would encourage applicants to highlight the relevant experience.</p>
<p>Would you like us to provide a bibliography? If yes, will it be included in the 5 pages of the main proposal or as supplementary material with the CVs?</p>	<p>CVs and bibliographies are not included in the five-page limit of the proposal.</p>