



**Michigan Center for
Advancing Safe Transportation throughout the Lifespan
Research Excellence Program**

**2009
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
(RFP Number 03)**

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Issued on May 4, 2009

Letter of Intent due May 18, 2009 (send to M-CASTL@umich.edu)

Proposals due June 15, 2009 (send to M-CASTL@umich.edu)

Funding begins September 15, 2009

The Michigan Center for Advancing Safe Transportation throughout the Lifespan (M-CASTL) invites proposals for research projects for the period September 15, 2009 – September 14, 2010. The total funding available under this Request for Proposals (RFP) is \$200,000. The maximum award is \$67,000 per project.

Background

M-CASTL is a University Transportation Center at the University of Michigan (U-M) funded through the US Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA). The theme of M-CASTL is *Safety and Mobility throughout the Lifespan*. Detailed information about M-CASTL, including the Center's strategic plan, can be found at: <http://M-CASTL.org>.

M-CASTL strives to advance knowledge and best practices in areas related to the safety and mobility of both young people and older adults through basic and applied research, education, and technology transfer. Specific thrusts of the Center's Research Excellence Program include understanding and addressing: the changing perceptual, cognitive, and psychomotor abilities of older drivers; the transportation needs of young people and older adults when they are unable or choose not to drive themselves; and the elevated crash risk of young drivers.

Overview of Research Proposals

M-CASTL invites proposals that address the following priority research topic: *supporting the transition from driving to non-driving to ensure the safe mobility of older adults*. Older adult transportation can be thought of as a continuum with "fully independent driving" at one end and "dependence on other community mobility options" at the other end. Between these ends is the

transitioning process, where both traffic safety and mobility maintenance goals come into play. However, very little research has addressed how this transitioning process can be supported, whether from a social and behavioral, medical, engineering, or technological standpoint. We invite proposals on this topic from throughout the U-M community, as the issues associated with the transitioning process are multifaceted and require the expertise and experience of a broad range of disciplines including, but not limited to, psychology, sociology, public health, medicine, pharmacy, urban planning, engineering, education, occupational therapy, and social work.

Proposals should also be supportive of the national research priorities of the USDOT as outlined in the *Department of Transportation Strategic Plan* (http://www.dot.gov/about_dot.html), the *US Department of Transportation Research, Development, and Technology Plan* (http://www.rita.dot.gov/publications/transportation_rd_t_strategic_plan/), and other items that RITA may post on the UTC Program's website (<http://utc.dot.gov>).

Applicants are required to provide a 100 percent non-federal cost share and/or cost match for the proposed project's direct costs. The rules governing the use of cost share and cost match are set forth in the most recent revision of OMB Circular A-110. Such funds must be used to accomplish program objectives and the purpose of the grant, and be fully documented and carefully accounted for in the Grantee's records. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that proposed cost share and cost match funds are allowable, and if such funds are deemed unallowable after project award, responsibility for covering the funds will rest with the applicants' department/unit. Any restriction on the use of federal funds applies equally to non-federal matching funds.

M-CASTL will sponsor a workshop on Tuesday May 12, 2009 on strategies for providing cost share/cost match for proposals. The workshop will be held at the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI) from 1 – 2 PM (McCormick Conference Room, 2901 Baxter Road, Ann Arbor). There is no charge for the workshop – reservations should be made by contacting Amanda Dallaire at M-CASTL@umich.edu. The issue of cost share/cost match can be somewhat complex and we encourage all applicants to attend the workshop or contact Cathy Seay-Ostrowski at UMTRI (cathyso@umich.edu). Ms. Seay-Ostrowski has agreed to help individual proposing investigators identify existing resources in the University and within their units that would be acceptable as cost share and/or match for possible M-CASTL projects.

Applicants are also required to build a “quad-team” for research projects consisting of faculty members from at least two different U-M units, at least one student, and at least one government/industrial/community representative. The quad approach is intended to ensure multidisciplinary research, student involvement in projects, and the translation of research results into practical transportation solutions.

Eligibility requirements

- Academic and research faculty submitting proposals must be eligible to serve as Principal Investigators (PIs) at U-M.
- Proposals must focus on the 2009 M-CASTL priority research topic described above.
- Investigators must provide a 100 percent non-federal cost share and/or cost match.

- Investigators must use a quad-team approach as described above.
- Total Center-funded budget cannot exceed \$67,000 direct costs.
- The proposed project period should be 1 year.

Selection process and criteria

Submitted proposals will first be reviewed by Center staff to ensure that they meet the eligibility and other requirements of the RFP. Those not meeting the requirements will be dropped from the selection process and the PIs will be notified. Those meeting the requirements will be forwarded to the M-CASTL Research Subcommittee responsible for overseeing the selection process. Each proposal will be peer-reviewed by at least three reviewers with the goal of having one from the USDOT and one from outside of U-M. Reviewers will provide written comments and score proposals, based on the selection criteria below. The subcommittee will then meet to select proposals for funding based on the peer-reviews and priorities of M-CASTL. PIs of both successful and unsuccessful proposals will be notified and provided with the written comments of the reviewers. PIs of successful proposals will be required to sign an agreement stating that they will follow M-CASTL research project requirements, including requirements for reporting and technology transfer. Selection criteria include:

- Significance (30%):
 - Does the proposed study address an important issue?
 - How will the proposed study advance scientific knowledge or clinical/professional practice?
 - To what extent does the proposed study address the USDOT-wide priority areas: 1) advanced research (i.e., research that involves and draws upon basic research results to provide a better understanding of phenomena and develop innovative solutions to convey its fundamental character, its broader objectives, and the great uncertainty in expected outcomes compared to problem-solving research) and/or 2) congestion chokepoints (with projects intended to demonstrate deployable results within 1 year and identify and/or ameliorate the factors that contribute to congestion of freight and/or passenger traffic in urban areas; such projects may involve any discipline of science, engineering, technology, and policy analysis that is capable of addressing these factors).

- Approach (30%):
 - Are the research aims clearly delineated?
 - Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, integrated, reasoned, and appropriate to the aims of the proposed study?
 - Are potential problems acknowledged and strategies proposed for overcoming them?

- Innovation (20%):
 - Is the proposed study new and original?
 - Does the proposed study develop or use novel concepts, approaches, methods, tools, or technologies for this area?

- Investigators (10%):
 - Are the investigators appropriately trained and well suited to carry out this work?
 - Is the work proposed appropriate to the experience level of the principal investigator and other researchers?
 - Does the research team bring complementary and integrated experience to the proposed study?

- Practical Application (10%):
 - Is there a potential for translating research results into practical applications (e.g., guidelines, standards, or other products) that can be used by government and other professionals?
 - Are the investigators well positioned to disseminate knowledge generated from the research (e.g., through papers, presentations, teaching)?

Proposal Content

Proposals should include a title page, abstract, problem statement, work plan, budget and budget justification, and biographical sketches for key investigators. Each proposal should identify the specific priority research topics being addressed. Length requirements are outlined below:

- Cover page including title, names of PI and co-investigators, contact information for PI, and other pertinent information – 1 page. Click <http://m-castl.org/files/M-CASTLRFP2009-03CoverPageTemplate.doc> for cover page template.
- Abstract – up to 300 words. Click <http://m-castl.org/files/M-CASTLRFP2009-03AbstractTemplate.doc> for abstract template.
- Problem statement including background and relevance – up to 1 page
- Work plan discussing the scientific approach – up to 5 pages
- Reference list – length as needed
- Budget - Click <http://m-castl.org/files/M-CASTLRFP2009-03BudgetTemplate.xls> for budget template.
- Budget justification – length as needed. Detailed information on sources of cost match/cost share is required. Guidelines will be presented in workshop and provided by Cathy Seay-Ostrowski.
- M-CASTL Proposal Approval Form. Click <http://m-castl.org/files/M-CASTLRFP2009-03PAFTemplate.pdf> for PAF.
- Biographical sketches for PI and co-investigators – up to 2 pages per person
- Names and contact information for two to four individuals you believe are qualified to review the proposal (1-2 from U-M, 1-2 from outside U-M)
- All documents are available to download on our website at <http://m-castl.org/node/56>.

The proposal should be in Times Roman font (12 point), with 1-inch margins all around. Proposals should not exceed page limits identified above, but should have sufficient detail to address the selection criteria.

Project reporting and technology transfer requirements

- Quarterly progress reports
- Final report
- Preparation of a 5-minute summary of the findings and the application of the results for safety and mobility to be included in web briefings program, digitally recorded at M-CASTL
- Copies of all papers submitted to journals or conferences based on project research provided to M-CASTL

Information will be provided on the M-CASTL website prior to project award on the required format for progress reports and final summary reports.

Submission instructions

Letter of intent should be submitted electronically in PDF or Word format directly to M-CASTL at M-CASTL@umich.edu.

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