

Institute of
Transportation
Studies



Statewide Transportation Research Program

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Fiscal Year 2026-27 Research Grants

RFP Issued	Wednesday, April 1, 2026
Proposals Due	Thursday, May 21, 2026 at 5:00 PM PT
RFP Website	http://ucits.org/request-for-proposals
RFP Question Submission Form	https://bit.ly/RFP-questions
Proposal Template	https://bit.ly/UCITSRFPtemp26-27
Proposal Submission Form	https://bit.ly/RFP2026

Last Updated: April 1, 2026

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1.0 Description of Funding Opportunity

1.1 Overview

The [UC Institute of Transportation Studies](#) (UC ITS) receives funding from the State of California through the [Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017 \(SB 1\)](#) to support research, education, and outreach activities that address and inform transportation policy, planning, and engineering issues in California.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) will award approximately \$2.8 million from the UC ITS SB 1 allocation to support research across UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UC Irvine, UCLA and non-ITS UCs.

1.2 Research Priorities

Eligible applicants (see [Part 3.1 - Applicant Eligibility](#)) are invited to submit research proposals that respond to the priorities listed in [Part 2.0](#) of this RFP. The priorities were identified using feedback from the [UC ITS Council of Directors](#) and the [UC ITS Board of Advisors](#).

1.3 Funding Availability

The available funding that may be awarded through this RFP varies by campus. Approximate maximum amounts for each campus are listed below:

- UC Berkeley: \$700,000
- UC Davis: \$700,000
- UC Irvine: \$600,000
- UCLA: \$600,000
- Non-ITS UC: \$190,000

1.4 Project Award Period

Principal Investigators (PIs) will be notified by **Monday, August 3, 2026**, whether or not their submitted proposal has been selected for funding. The anticipated start date for projects is the beginning of the fall 2026 quarter/semester at each UC campus. All projects have a duration of 12 months unless otherwise specified; see [Part 3.3](#) for additional details. Note that in addition to providing progress reports while a project is active, PIs must also complete a project close-out survey and provide UC ITS with periodic updates on all publications and other products resulting from the project for two years following the project's completion. See [UC ITS Grant Award Requirements and Expectations](#) for more details on this and other grant requirements.

1.5 Key Activities Schedule

Key activities and deadlines for this solicitation are presented below:

Activity	Date	Time
Solicitation Release	Wednesday, April 1, 2026	
RFP Informational Webinar Registration Link	Thursday, April 9, 2026	10:00 AM PT
Deadline to request assistance in finding a stakeholder partner	Thursday, April 30, 2026	5:00 PM PT
Deadline to request an equity consult (UCLA only)	Wednesday, April 30, 2026	5:00 PM PT
Deadline to Submit Proposals	Thursday, May 21, 2026	5:00 PM PT
Notice of Award	By Monday, August 3, 2026	
Project Start Date	First day of the fall 2026 quarter/semester	

1.6 Questions and Assistance

Please use this online form (<https://bit.ly/RFP-questions>) to submit all questions concerning this RFP, including questions related to preparing project budgets, the status of prior UC ITS-funded projects, PI eligibility, and other topics. You may also use this form to request assistance with identifying a public agency or community-based organization for your project or to request an equity consultation; however, you must request this assistance by April 30, 2026.

2.0 Research Priorities

The UC ITS invites proposals that respond to the research priorities as described in this section. PIs may submit proposals on topics not covered by the research priorities below, however, the proposal must demonstrate strong evidence of public agency and/or community-based organization support.

When preparing proposals, the UC ITS strongly encourages PIs to consider how their proposed research intersects with and/or directly addresses equity and justice. PIs are encouraged to use this [Equity Worksheet](#) when developing their proposal to enhance equity connections, identify potential community partners, and more.

1. Public Transit¹, Shared Mobility, and Active Transportation

1.1. Active Transportation

How do active transportation investments impact vehicle miles traveled, transportation emissions, safety, access, and the economy? Are travelers engaging in active transportation by choice or necessity? What are barriers to increasing active transportation usage among different groups, and how can policy and infrastructure changes address these disparities?

1.2. New Mobility Services, Programs, and Technologies

What lessons are emerging from pilot projects in California testing new public transit service models (e.g., microtransit, carsharing) or technologies, especially those focused on serving suburbs as well as smaller cities and towns? How can shared mobility options (e.g., micromobility, ridehailing) be better integrated with public transit service?

1.3. Public Transit Safety

How do safety perceptions among public transit riders impact their overall travel experience, and what measures can be taken to improve rider confidence and satisfaction? What best practices are emerging to humanely address problematic behaviors among transit riders?

2. Infrastructure Delivery, Operations, & Resilience

2.1. Transportation Resilience and Wildfire Preparedness

How should climate risks, including wildfires, factor into transportation infrastructure decision making? How do infrastructure failures and closures impact the environment, economy, public health, and safety? What changes to governance are needed for a more resilient system? What lessons from past wildfire evacuations can improve future responses? How can shared modes, such as public transit, be better integrated into evacuation plans? How does the availability of transportation options affect evacuation rates, particularly among vulnerable populations?

2.2. Transportation-Related Project Delivery

How do regulatory and permitting processes impact the speed and efficiency of transportation-related project delivery? What are the key factors influencing cost overruns and delays in projects? How can emerging technologies (e.g., digital twins, AI, modular construction) improve project planning, execution, and maintenance?

2.3. Infrastructure Material Sustainability, Resilience, and Affordability

Transportation agencies face growing challenges from rising construction material prices, decarbonization requirements, labor shortages, and increasing transportation and supply chain costs. How can California deliver resilient transportation infrastructure while maintaining

¹ For additional public transit-related priorities, see 7.2 Automated Vehicles for Public Transportation and 6.2 Advancing Zero-Emission Commercial Vehicles and Buses

affordability and meeting climate goals? What innovations in materials (e.g., low-carbon concrete, recycled aggregates, and alternative binders), construction methods, and supply chains can reduce lifecycle costs and emissions while improving durability and performance? What policies, procurement strategies, and standards can accelerate adoption of sustainable materials and construction practices without delaying project delivery or significantly increasing costs?

3. Travel Behavior, Land Use, & the Built Environment

3.1. Housing in Walkable, Transit-Friendly Places

How effective are transportation-centered CEQA streamlining provisions in promoting infill housing development, and what factors influence their use or lack thereof? What changes to CEQA and permitting will increase infill housing and the availability of affordable housing with good transportation accessibility? How can state, regional, and local policies better preserve and grow affordable housing in walkable, transit-friendly places?

4. Mobility Justice and Community Needs

4.1. Community-identified Transportation Needs

UC ITS invites proposals that i) address a community-identified transportation-related need, solution, or topic; and ii) is conducted in partnership with one or more community partners (e.g., community-based organization, community leader) from a marginalized community or neighborhood in California.

4.2. Equity-Focused Planning and Investments

What lessons can be learned from community-based transportation initiatives, such as California's [Community Air Protection Program](#)? How effective are equity-focused strategies in improving mobility for disadvantaged communities? How do transportation investments, including infrastructure and zero-emission vehicle programs, impact low-income communities and communities of color compared to other users? What best practices from other states can inform California's approach?

5. Transportation Governance, Policy, and Finance

5.1. Transportation Finance, Pricing, and Policy

What are primary barriers and related solutions for implementing a Road User Charge in California, particularly related to data privacy, governance, and public acceptance? What might a comprehensive transportation pricing framework look like that balances revenue generation with goals like accessibility, congestion management, safety, economic development, emissions reduction, and equity?

5.2. Managing Conflicting Goals in State and Local Policy

What are the causes and effects of conflicting policy goals at the state and local level? How do factors, such as the geographic scale of governance and time horizons for decision making, shape conflicts between state transportation goals and local policies? How do these conflicts impact transportation planning and decision-making? What strategies or tools² can make tradeoffs more explicit and systematically evaluated? What lessons from other regions can help resolve these tensions?

5.3. Leveraging Mega-Events

What strategies help ensure that transportation infrastructure improvements for a mega-event have long-term benefits for the region's mobility and sustainability? What partnerships between public agencies, private sector stakeholders, and event organizers can help maximize the transportation legacy of a mega-event while minimizing disruptions?

6. Zero-Emission Transportation (ZEV) and Low-Carbon Fuels

6.1. Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Deployment and Grid Implications

What kind of EV charging infrastructure is needed (including grid-related)? Where is it needed and when? How much will it cost, and who should pay? What are the roles of the public vis-a-vis private sectors for deploying infrastructure? What strategies will help ensure all communities have access to reliable, affordable charging? How can policy accelerate smart charging, vehicle-to-grid, and renewable integration?

6.2. Advancing Zero-Emission Commercial Vehicles and Buses

What lessons could be learned from the deployment elsewhere of zero-emission commercial vehicles and buses that could help California reach its ambitious greenhouse gas emission targets in the current geopolitical environment?

6.3. Research Synthesis on Implications of Electrification on Critical Minerals

What are the supply chain implications from vehicle electrification and the energy transition more broadly? What are demand-side policies that could help overcome challenges? How do we ensure battery materials are responsibly sourced and recycled at end of life? What are the implications of battery and vehicle size on the demand for critical minerals?

6.4. Hard-to-Decarbonize Sectors

What transportation sectors may not be shifting to zero-emission in the next 20 years? Should the state prioritize their decarbonization? If so, what are viable options for moving these sectors

² Note: In August 2024, Caltrans released the [Caltrans System Investment Strategy](#), an investment framework for evaluation of transportation infrastructure projects in alignment with the California State Transportation Agency's Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI, 2021)

towards low-emission technologies and fuels? What are the impacts of recent and future oil refinery closures in California?

6.5. Low-Carbon Fuels

How do state policies, including those related to the Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS), influence feedstock supply and competitive dynamics between California and other LCFS states, particularly with regard to limited resources? What is the evolving role of hydrogen in decarbonizing the transportation sector, and what are key policy mechanisms and levers to improve hydrogen production (with low-carbon intensity) and reduce costs?

7. Intelligent Transportation Systems, Emerging Technologies, & Big Data

7.1. Connected and Automated Vehicles

How can advancements in safety methodologies, human-automation interactions, and teleoperations improve the reliability and performance of CAVs in real-world conditions? How can secure data-sharing platforms and other strategies enhance collaboration among government, industry, and communities to ensure the safe, equitable, and sustainable rollout of CAVs? What are the challenges, risks, and opportunities for safely integrating connected and automated vehicles (CAVs) into our transportation system?

7.2. Automated Vehicles for Public Transportation

How could automated vehicles be used to reduce vehicle use and enhance mobility and accessibility? Under what conditions would passengers share rides? What might be the demand by physically limited riders? How might mobility services be regulated and incentivized and perhaps subsidized to attract large riderships? What changes are needed with policy, transit governance, regulation of mobility service companies, labor restrictions, and more to employ automated vehicle technology for public transportation?

8. Freight & Goods Movement³

8.1. Future of Freight

What key trends, including demand, state and local regulations, emerging technologies, and geopolitical factors, will shape California's freight system in the coming years, and how should California plan for changes in goods movement?

³ For additional freight-related priorities, see priority area 6 - Zero-Emission Transportation (ZEV) and Low-Carbon Fuels

8.2. *E-Commerce and Last-Mile Delivery*

How is e-commerce changing urban freight distribution, and what infrastructure, land use, and policy strategies are needed to support more sustainable and equitable logistics systems?

9. Safety⁴

9.1. *Increasing Traffic Safety*

What factors explain the alarming rise of crashes, injuries, and deaths in recent years on California's streets and highways, and what might be done about it? Specifically, what policy, infrastructure, enforcement, and behavioral interventions hold the most promise in making California's surface transportation systems safer for travelers, particularly vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians, bicyclists, seniors, or children? Finally, what assistance can the state provide to support municipal, county, and regional agencies in their safety efforts?

10. Other Topics

UC ITS also welcomes proposals on other topics that are closely related to state, regional, and local transportation policy. However, proposers must discuss such a proposal with their campus lead at least a week before the deadline. In general, demonstrated interest from a California government agency or community-based organization will be required.

3.0 Applicant and Project Eligibility

3.1 Applicant Eligibility

Lead applicants include anyone eligible to serve as a PI at any UC campus⁵. Postdoctoral researchers submitting proposals as the PI must meet the following criteria based on the campus they are associated with:

UC Davis: Must include at least one Academic Senate faculty member or Academic Federation researcher advisor on the project as a Co-PI who will assume responsibility of the project in the event that the postdoctoral researcher is unable to see the project through to completion.

UCLA: Must include at least one Academic Senate faculty member on the project as a Co-PI who will provide institutional and administrative support as well as assume responsibility for the project in the event that the postdoctoral researcher is unable to see the project through to completion. In most cases, this will be the postdoctoral researcher's faculty advisor.

⁴ For additional safety priorities, see priority 1.3 Public Transit Safety

⁵ UC Irvine: Lead PIs at UC Irvine must be ITS-Irvine Faculty Associates.

UC Irvine: Postdoctoral Researchers, Project Scientists, Research Engineers, and other non-Senate positions are ineligible to serve as PI on projects but are encouraged to collaborate with an eligible ITS-Irvine Faculty Associate to participate in UC ITS funded projects.

UC Berkeley: Postdoctoral Researchers are ineligible to apply as lead PI on projects, but may serve as a Co-PI with a PI who will provide institutional and administrative support as well as assume responsibility for the project if the postdoctoral researcher is unable to see the project through to completion.

Non-ITS UCs: Must be eligible to serve as PI on their campus.

Other researchers, graduate students, and undergraduate students may be included in the proposal with their salary covered in place of the PI's salary in part or in whole; however, the PI remains responsible for the project.

Researchers are limited to being listed as a PI on only one applied research project and as a co-PI on one additional applied research project. There is no limit to the number of translational projects or research synthesis proposals a researcher may be listed as PI or co-PI on.⁶

Researchers from other university systems, the public sector, and/or for-profit private sector are not eligible for funding through this RFP. Exceptions may be approved if special circumstances warranting the exception are explained in the proposal.

Community-based organizations are eligible for funding (see [Part 4.1 - Eligible Costs and Budget Guidelines](#) for more information).

PIs who have outstanding deliverables for previously awarded UC ITS SB1 projects are not eligible unless all outstanding deliverables are submitted prior to the proposal deadline for this RFP. *This includes deliverable revisions that have been requested by UC ITS staff with a submission deadline prior to the proposal deadline.* PIs with projects funded last year in the UC ITS FY 2025-26 SB1 RFP cycle are eligible to apply; however, all expected project deliverables must be completed before FY 2026-27 SB1 funds will be disbursed. PIs who fail to meet expected deliverable deadlines for FY 2025-26 SB1 awards risk losing their FY 2026-27 SB1 award. Applicants may request verification of their eligibility and/or any past due deliverables on prior projects through the online form (<https://bit.ly/RFP-questions>).

3.2 Multicampus Collaborations

The UC ITS is a [Multicampus Research Unit](#) and encourages multicampus collaborations across ITS campuses (Berkeley, Davis, Irvine, UCLA) and with other UC campuses. The decision to fund a multicampus proposal in its entirety or in part will be made collaboratively by the ITS campuses named in the proposal. If one or more non-ITS campuses are named, a committee of reviewers nominated by each ITS campus will also participate in the collaborative decision-making process.

3.3 Eligible Project Types

⁶ UCLA: PIs at UCLA will be limited to receiving a maximum of \$150,000 per year over all awarded projects.

The following project types will be considered:

Project Type	Description	Expected Annual Award Range
Applied Research Project	Applied research projects close a knowledge gap on an important issue and involve original data acquisition and/or analysis. Shorter-term projects (12 months or less) are preferred, but longer-term projects (over 12 months) will be considered. Multi-campus projects are encouraged.	\$100,000 per participating campus; up to \$400,000 total
Research Synthesis	A research synthesis should summarize existing research on a given topic and identify research gaps for critical policy and/or practice-related questions. The synthesis should be prepared for an informed but non-technical audience.	\$25,000 to \$40,000 per participating campus, up to \$100,000 total
Translational Project	Translational projects support the extension of completed research to additional applications, contexts, or audiences. Activities supported by translational projects can include real-world testing, website development, implementation activities, tool development, training programs, workshops, and/or development of practice- or policy-oriented outreach and informational materials (e.g., policy briefs, infographics, blog posts, videos, and other media).	\$40,000 to \$60,000 per participating campus, up to \$160,000 total

4.0 Proposal Preparation and Submission Guidelines

4.1 Eligible Costs and Budget Guidelines

Proposals should be budgeted to begin at the start of the 2026 fall semester or quarter. Budgets should be fiscally conservative and cost-effective. Applicants are encouraged to work with their department's financial analyst(s) to develop budgets, adhering to any budget requirements their campus may have, such as minimum PI effort.

UC Davis, UCLA, and UC Irvine PIs must include detailed budgets in their campus's preferred Excel budget template on the proposal submission form. Budget templates can be downloaded from the links below:

- UC Davis budget template: <https://ucdavis.box.com/v/UCD-BudgetTemplate-2026-27>
- UC Irvine budget template: <https://www.its.uci.edu/rfp/strp-2026-27-budget-template>
- UCLA budget template: <https://bit.ly/UCLAITSBUDGET>

PIs submitting single-campus proposals at UC Berkeley or another non-ITS UC may report their budgets in the Project Budget Summary Table portion of the [Proposal Template](#) (see Section 4. Budget) and do not need to upload an Excel budget in the proposal submission form.

4.1.1 Direct and Indirect Costs

Only include direct costs in the budget. These costs will vary depending on the project, but include the salaries and fringe benefits of project personnel, travel, materials, supplies, and miscellaneous costs attributed to the project. Projects funded through this solicitation are not subject to indirect costs (i.e., the Facilities and Administrative (F&A) rate or Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) is 0%).

4.1.2 Multicampus Budget Proposals

For multicampus proposals, the lead PI and each campus co-PI should work together to develop:

- A single budget for the full project, to be reported in the Project Budget Summary Table, found in Section 4. Budget of the [Proposal Template](#), and
- Separate budgets for each campus involved, using the following templates for expenses specific to each campus:
 - UC Davis budget template: <https://ucdavis.box.com/v/UCD-BudgetTemplate-2026-27>
 - UC Irvine budget template: <https://www.its.uci.edu/rfp/strp-2026-27-budget-template>
 - UC Los Angeles template: <https://bit.ly/UCLAITSBUDGET>
 - UC Berkeley, non-ITS UCs: [UC ITS and UC Berkeley Budget Template](#)

For example, PIs from three UC campuses collaborating on a multicampus project would submit a Project Budget Summary Table illustrating the total project budget and three separate budgets for each UC campus involved in an editable spreadsheet format (Excel or Google Sheets).

4.1.3 Student Support

Applied research proposals that include funding for one or more graduate student researchers will be more competitive. Funding for graduate students is encouraged on all proposals. Postdoctoral researchers are not considered students. Non-resident tuition is an allowable expense.

4.1.4 Travel, Materials, and Supplies

A limited amount of materials, supplies, and travel for data collection purposes and/or presenting research may be included, provided that they are a direct expense related to completing or disseminating the work. Allowable travel expenses are as follows:

- Travel to events and/or meetings within California to present research results is encouraged;
- Minimal domestic travel outside of California requires strong justification in the budget narrative;
- International travel is not allowed.

Applicants are discouraged from budgeting for computers, equipment, outside consultants, or any salary that goes beyond normal academic or summer compensation. A written justification for all supplies and travel is required.

4.1.5 Funding for Community-Based or Non-Profit Organizations

PIs conducting place-based research or research focused on state- or federally-identified vulnerable, disadvantaged, or priority populations are strongly encouraged to partner with and compensate community-based organizations for their role in designing, performing, translating, and disseminating the research. This compensation is distinct from any IRB-approved research subject participation incentives and all research subject compensation must be approved by your campus IRB.

Proposals which incorporate the meaningful participation of community-based organizations (CBOs) and/or support meaningful engagement with communities can exceed the maximum funding amount for the project type (see [Part 3.3 - Eligible Project Types](#) for maximum funding amounts for different project types). The excess amount above the maximum funding amount must be budgeted exclusively for the community-based organization and/or community member(s) contributing to the research, and/or community engagement-related expenses. In general, the excess amount should not exceed 25% above the maximum funding amount for the proposal type and the funding to the CBO should not exceed 20% of the total budget.

E.g., a proposal for an applied research project that includes a CBO may request up to an additional \$25,000 beyond the \$100,000 limit for those proposal types; however, the amount of the budget that is allocated to the CBO may not exceed \$25,000 (20% of the \$125,000 budget).

The purpose of an allocation to a CBO must be justified in detail within the proposal. Research projects incorporating CBOs and/or community engagement opportunities should result in unique contributions and perspectives explored while still being UC-led research. CBO participation and/or community engagement opportunities should be complementary to the UC-led, faculty-supervised research.

Eligible recipient organizations must be IRS-recognized as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, have a United States bank account, be able to provide a taxpayer or employer ID number via a W-9 form, and have a mission, program, or service territory that the PI explicitly connects with the proposed research or geographic area of study. Contracts and details on costs may be required for invoices to be processed; please refer to your campus' purchasing and invoicing policies. For help or additional information, submit requests through the online questions form (See [Part 1.6](#)).

4.2 Proposal Organization

Proposals **must use** the Proposal Template (<https://bit.ly/UCITSRFPtemp26-27>) and Proposal Submission Form (<https://bit.ly/RFP2026>). The template contains detailed descriptions of the content required for the submission package.

Note: At the end of the proposal submission form, you will be asked to upload your full proposal file in a PDF format. Additionally, you will be asked to upload your campus-required budget spreadsheet format (i.e., .XLSX or .XLS; not PDF).

What follows is a list of the sections included in the Proposal Template.

- **Section 1: Proposal Narrative** must not exceed 10 pages; the recommended length is 5 pages. The proposal narrative must include the following subsections, which also appear in the Proposal

Template. Do not edit the subsection headings. See the Proposal Template for more information on what to include in each subsection.

- *Problem Statement* (approx. 200 words)
 - *Proposal Summary* (approx. 300 words)
 - *Expected Impact* (approx. 300 words)
 - *Equity Considerations* (OPTIONAL; approx. 300 words)
 - *Research Design and Methods* (approx. 1,500 words; required for applied research proposals only)
 - *Products and Deliverables* (approx. 500 words)
- **Section 2: Scope of Work** – The scope of work identifies the tasks required to complete the work. This section should be approximately 1–2 pages and include a Task Schedule using the format provided in the Proposal Template.
 - **Section 3: Collaboration Plan (for multicampus proposals only)** - For describing how, and with what methods and/or tools, researchers at different campuses will work together in a collaborative and integrated way.
 - **Section 4: Budget** - This section includes two components, listed below and described in detail in the Proposal Template:
 - *Project Budget Summary Table* - For summarizing budget data for the full project, regardless of the number of campuses involved.
 - *Budget Justification* - For explaining and justifying budget items contained in the budget summary table.
 - **Section 5. Citations** - This section includes a list of citations to work that is related or relevant to, or serves as background for, the proposed project.
 - **Section 6. CVs for the PI and any Co-PI(s) (maximum two pages per person)**
 - **Section 7. Statement(s) of Support (if applicable)** – A statement of support from a relevant and appropriate non-federal public sector stakeholder or community-based organization (CBO) located in California is welcomed but not required if the proposed project directly addresses one of the eight research priorities for the year ([link to research priorities](#)). If the proposal does not directly address one of the research priorities, a statement of support from a non-federal public sector stakeholder or CBO is required to show the relevance and importance of the proposed research to the stakeholder and its community in California. Statements of support from federal partners, such as National Labs, would not meet this requirement. Public sector stakeholders include, but are not limited to: local governments (city and county); regional public entities (Metropolitan Planning Organizations, air quality management districts, public utilities); state agencies; public transit agencies; and others. More details about the information the statement must cover and eligible formats can be found in the Proposal Template.

- **Section 8. Statement(s) of Commitment (if applicable)** – Required if the project includes matching funding or requires data, community-based engagement, or access to private or public facilities in order to conduct the research as designed. More details can be found in the Proposal Template.

4.3 Proposal Submission

4.3.1 Pre-Submission Checklist

Please note: You should prepare all information ahead of time to complete the submission in one sitting. On this year’s submission form, your submission progress may be saved automatically in your browser's cached information, however, the cached information can still be lost. Use the checklist below to make sure you have everything you need prior to beginning your online submission.

- **Final proposal in .doc(x) format for data entry**
You will be asked to copy and paste all the information from the Cover Pages directly into the proposal submission form.
- **Final proposal in PDF format**
The PDF should combine all elements found in the Proposal Template, including CVs, Statement(s) of Support, and Statement(s) of Commitment. Furthermore, the final PDF should not contain any guidance or instructions text.

Please name the file using this convention*: *LastNameofPI_UCITS_2026_Proposal.pdf*
Example: *Podolsky_UCITS_2026_Proposal.pdf*

*If you are submitting more than 1 proposal, include the first two words of your proposal title in the filename. For example, a proposal entitled "Transitioning to Zero-Emission Buses," would have the filename: *Podolsky_UCITS_2026_Proposal_Transitioning to.pdf*

- **IF APPLICABLE: Final budget(s) in Excel (.xls or .xlsx) format for upload**
This is applicable for:
 - Single-campus projects led by a UC Davis, UC Irvine, or UCLA PI (using their campuses’ provided template)
 - A multicampus project (one budget per campus)

Please name each file using this convention: *LastNameofPI_UCITS_2026_Campus_Budget.xls*
Example: *Podolsky_UCITS_2026_UCB_Budget.xls*

*If you are submitting more than 1 proposal, include the first two words of your proposal title in the filename. Example: *Podolsky_UCITS_2026_UCB_Budget_Transitioning to.xls*

4.3.2 Online proposal submission

Proposals responding to this RFP are due Thursday, May 21, 2026 at 5:00 PM PT.

Proposal materials must be submitted through the online proposal submission form:
<https://bit.ly/RFP2026>

The online submission form will close promptly at 5:00 PM PT and submissions cannot be submitted or accepted after this time. Please be sure to press “Submit Proposal” on the online form before 5:00 PM to ensure that your proposal is received. You will receive an email confirmation of your submission.

Review by your campus’ OCGA/SPO/SPA is ***not*** required for this internal solicitation.

4.4 Evaluation and Review Process

The following process and criteria will be used to screen and evaluate projects:

4.4.1 Submission Screening

To advance in the review process, applications must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. Does the PI meet the requirements detailed in [Part 3.1 - Applicant Eligibility?](#)
2. Are both the application and proposal complete and do they comply with the requirements detailed in [Part 4.2 - Proposal Organization](#)?
3. Does the proposal have an explicit link to one or more of the research priority areas listed in [Part 2.0 - Research Priorities and Prompts?](#)

4.4.2 Proposal Review

Proposals that pass submission screening will be reviewed and evaluated according to the following criteria. Proposal reviews may be conducted by researchers, experts, and/or practitioners who are external to the UC ITS research community.

Evaluation Category	Scoring Weight	Description
A. Research Design and Technical Merit	40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quality, clarity, and cohesiveness of the research design, scope, and methods ● Originality and/or innovation of proposed work ● Clear definition of equity group and/or topic under study (if applicable)
B. Expected Impact and Stakeholder Engagement	35%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Potential for the proposed project to advance or inform transportation policies, programs or practices in California ● Quality and alignment of the Statement(s) of Support (if applicable) ● Quality and appropriateness of stakeholder engagement ● Timeline of direct engagement and intended contribution to equity priority communities (if applicable)
C. Research Team: Qualifications, Student Involvement, and Past Performance	25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Qualifications of the PI and the research team to perform the work. For multi-campus projects, robustness of collaboration (the work is well-integrated and not separate but parallel) will also be evaluated. ● Degree to which project will provide funding for one or more student researchers (See Part 4.1.3).

Evaluation Category	Scoring Weight	Description
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prior performance on UC ITS projects (if applicable). ● The research team or budgeted partners have record of work with equity priority communities (if applicable)

4.4.3 Final Selection

Final project selections will be made by an internal review committee at each ITS campus or ITS Central for non-ITS proposals, taking into account the quantitative scores and the qualitative evaluations, programmatic priorities, and funding availability. Review comments will be provided to applicants when awards are announced. The UC ITS does not guarantee that proposals will be funded in all topic areas, or that any proposal will be funded.

4.5 Award and Administration Information

4.5.1 Award Notice

It is anticipated that researchers will be notified by Monday, August 3, 2026, whether or not the proposal is selected for funding. Funding may be contingent on a revision to the proposal.

4.5.2 Award Administration

Project funds will be administered by the respective ITS (ITS-Davis, ITS Berkeley, ITS Irvine, UCLA ITS and ITS Irvine for non-ITS UCs) with an account or chartstring assigned for every project.

4.5.3 Grant Agreement Requirements

In accepting a UC ITS grant award, the PI agrees to the grant requirements and expectations as outlined in the Grant Requirement and Expectations document available on the [UC ITS Resources for Current webpage](#). Failure to meet these requirements will jeopardize the PI's consideration for funding in future years.