

**Washington State Department of Transportation  
Zero-Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Partnership (ZEVIP)  
2023-2025 Grant Guidelines**

**Question & Answer Document**

The following answers are based on WSDOT staff’s interpretation of the questions received. It is the applicant’s responsibility to review the purpose of the grant and to determine whether or not their proposed project is eligible for funding. This document contains the questions WSDOT received on the ZEVIP grant guidelines through the formal question submittal period; questions were submitted by e-mail and during the ZEVIP webinar from prospective applicants. WSDOT staff combined duplicates, paraphrased, added responses, and grouped questions. WSDOT recommends applicants review all responses as some topics overlap groups.

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**General, eligibility, operations and maintenance**

**1. Will the ZEVIP webinar, attendees, and slides become available?**

Yes, these are all posted to [Zero-emission Vehicle Infrastructure Partnerships grant | WSDOT \(wa.gov\)](#).

**2. Where do we locate the application?**

Please see notice of funding opportunity and grant application guide on the [Zero-emission Vehicle Infrastructure Partnerships grant | WSDOT \(wa.gov\)](#) website for complete instructions on the grant submittal format, specifically the Application Requirements section.

**3. Is there a funding floor or ceiling (lowest and highest request amount) of which applicants should be aware?**

There is no minimum or maximum award.

**4. Can a non-profit submit an unlimited number of applications as long as they satisfy solicitation requirements?**

Yes, there is no limit to the number of applications.

**5. Are costs reimbursed as they are accrued, or only at the completion of the project?**

The award funding is reimbursement-based. Approved project costs are reimbursed throughout the project as expenditures are incurred and invoiced.

**6. Do the projects need to be operational by June 30, 2025? Will there be an opportunity for extensions?**

Projects need to be operational by June 30, 2025. ZEVIP funds expire on this date so there will not be an opportunity for extensions.

**7. Could you please clarify if the \$3 million is the amount that is planned to be distributed among the winning applicants or per applicant?**

We anticipate approximately \$3 million in funding for the 2023-2025 biennium, which is subject to change based on the final budget. The highest ranked projects along a corridor will be recommended for funding. The number of awards will depend on how much funding each applicant requests.

**8. Can a site currently under construction or in design have funding applied retroactively? Could this site be eligible for grant funds?**

State funds have no pre-award authority. As such, any costs that an applicant incurs before the beginning date of the grant agreement will not be eligible for reimbursement. Successful applicants can be reimbursed for eligible expenses after the beginning of the agreement. The term of agreement will begin at mutual execution and expire at the end of the biennium.

**9. What Counties are eligible to apply?**

All Counties are eligible to apply.

**10. Are Ports eligible to apply?**

Yes, Ports are eligible to apply.

**11. Are fleet projects eligible?**

Yes, if they meet all project requirements.

**12. Are utilities eligible to apply?**

Public utilities are eligible to apply. Investor-owned utilities are not eligible to apply directly. Investor-owned utilities may serve as the private partner on a project team, however.

**13. Are cooperative utilities eligible applicants?**

This would depend on how the utility was legally formed. If organized as non-profit or public utility, they would be eligible to apply. Investor-owned utilities are ineligible, though.

**14. Are heavy-duty charging or hydrogen fueling stations considered eligible projects? Do you know of any grants or plans for future grants related to medium-duty or heavy-duty charging infrastructure?**

This grant is for passenger cars and light duty trucks. Please see the U.S. Department of Energy's Alternative Fuels Data Center for a complete list of all Washington incentives, including for medium and heavy duty opportunities: [Alternative Fuels Data Center: Washington Laws and Incentives \(energy.gov\)](https://www.energy.gov/alternative-fuels-data-center).

**15. Would the addition of a new transformer be considered a reimbursable expense?**

Yes, if necessary to power the station.

**16. Is battery energy storage an eligible expense?**

Yes.

**17. Is EV charging networking software an eligible expense?**

Yes.

**18. Is there a requirement for Level 2, plug adapters, or 110/120V outlets at the sites? Are the installation of these eligible for grant reimbursement?**

There are no requirements for Level 2, plug adapters, or 110/120V outlets but applicants are encouraged to describe any additional equipment they're proposing, beyond the minimum requirements, to serve additional customers. These are all eligible expenses for reimbursement.

**19. Who pays the cost of electricity while the station is in use?**

The cost of electricity to charge vehicles is not a reimbursable expense. The grant recipient will be responsible for ensuring payment of all operating costs, including but not limited to payment of leases, rents, royalties, licenses, fees, taxes, revenue sharing, utilities, and electric power supply for the charging equipment and supporting elements, such as area lighting. The charging station provider may collect fees from drivers and reinvest the funds into the project.

**20. Is a one-time charge for a 5-year networking service an eligible expense? Are networking costs covered under the grant?**

Yes, networking costs are eligible expenses under this program.

**21. Would applicants be able to contract for the operations and maintenance and customer service requirements? Are O&M eligible expenses? Does ZEVIP fund long-term maintenance?**

Yes, applicants can work directly with an EVSE service provider to ensure the maintenance and customer service requirements are met for the first five years of operation. Expenses during the term of agreement would be eligible for reimbursement.

The grant recipient will be responsible for ensuring payment of all operating and maintenance costs, including but not limited to payment of leases, rents, royalties, licenses, fees, taxes, revenue sharing, utilities, and electric power supply for the charging equipment and supporting elements, such as area lighting.

**22. Who owns and maintains the EV chargers? Can ownership be transferred during or after the grant agreement?**

Ultimately the grant agreement signatory is responsible to ensure the station is operational and maintained for the first five years. The applicant does not need to own and operate the equipment and may partner with an EVSE service provider during and/or after the required five-year operational period. The owner-operator is defined in the program rules as any entity involved in installing, operating, and maintaining charging and/or refueling equipment including, but not limited to, dedicated clean alternative fuel vehicle charging and refueling

service companies, equipment manufacturers, property owners serving as site hosts, automakers, electric utilities, electricity generators, and state and local governments.

Yes, ownership can be transferred but the grant agreement signatory will ultimately remain the responsible party for ensuring the station is operational. Applicants are responsible for ensuring they meet their agency's policies and procedures related to equipment management.

**23. Why is there a five-year operational requirement? What happens after the five years?**

WSDOT requires 5 years of operation at each station to avoid stranded assets and to protect the initial investment of public funds in EV infrastructure. Projects that outline a strategy for a longer-term operational period (greater than the mandatory five years) will rank higher in evaluations.

**24. Is purchase of chargers through the State's EVSE master purchasing agreement an option or a requirement?**

An option. The Department of Enterprise Services maintains a state master contract for EVSE (04016) which includes options for chargers, network services, maintenance, and installation.

**25. Can a state-owned rest area be considered for a location?**

No, not at this time.

**26. Is there help for local agencies about collecting fees, managing sites, or recommending vendors?**

The Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC) publishes articles that give guidance to local governments on implementation of EV charging stations, including charging practices, e.g.: [MRSC - Local Governments Take Innovative Approaches To Prepare For Electric Vehicles](#). EV supply equipment (EVSE) service providers may collect fees from EV drivers and complete back-end billing.

WSDOT cannot recommend vendors or private sector partners for applicants. Applicants are encouraged to review publicly available information sources, including the DES master contract for EVSE, and research groups that are active in alternative fuels in their region.

**27. Would sites that co-locate EV charging, Hydrogen fuel cell refueling, or renewable energy projects get preferential consideration?**

Projects that are co-located with other amenities will score higher in the ranking process. EV charging stations co-located with hydrogen fueling would also score higher in the innovation and sustainability category. Other improvements that achieve higher scores for innovation and sustainability include the use of renewable energy in the project, e.g. solar power panels or utilizing renewable hydrogen, and mitigating on-peak electricity demand.

**28. On page 20 of the guidelines, “Scoring Scale”, to achieve an “excellent score,” it states “Applicant offers one or more approaches exceeding basic expectations.” Could you please provide examples of an enhancing feature that might cause a project to be scored in the excellent category?**

That will depend on the criterion being assessed. An excellent response fully addresses the requirements being scored with a *high degree* of confidence in the applicant’s response or proposed solution and the applicant offers one or more enhancing features, methods or approaches exceeding basic expectations. A high degree of confidence in the applicant’s response could include extensive team experience and an exceptional implementation plan.

**29. How do you evaluate team experience? Experience serving drivers, owning fueling infrastructure, or experience in EV charging?**

Please see the project evaluation section and scoring scale for more information. Team experience and qualifications will be evaluated on the degree to which the:

- The project team’s qualifications (including relevant expertise, experience, and skill sets) are suitable to the tasks described in the proposed project.
- The applicant demonstrates the ability to meet deadlines and complete milestones associated with large, complex projects.
- Team member and key project partner functions are fully documented, complete and appropriate for successful project implementation.

**30. Do Buy America provisions pertain?**

No, these are state funds so federal requirements do not apply for this round.

### **31. Will projects need NEPA approval?**

There is no federal funding involved so SEPA will be applicable. Applicants are encouraged to review the SEPA exemption for battery charging and exchange station installation: [Chapter 43.21C RCW: STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY \(wa.gov\)](#). NEPA would be applicable to a project if any component of the project has a federal nexus (federal funding, federal permit requirements). It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure they meet funding requirements from other sources of project funding.

### **Other funding programs**

### **32. Is this NEVI funding? What is the timeline for NEVI?**

ZEVIP is state funding. The National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) formula program is federal funding and will be implemented under a separate process and under a different timeframe. WSDOT's goal is to issue a Request for Proposals in fall of 2023 for the NEVI formula program funds. Check online and sign up for updates at <https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/statewide-plans/washington-state-plan-electric-vehicle-infrastructure-deployment>. NEVI funded sites will need to be consistent with NEVI formula program guidance, which is located at: [Technical Assistance · Joint Office of Energy and Transportation \(driveelectric.gov\)](#).

In addition to NEVI formula funding, the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation recently released a Notice of Funding Opportunity for their Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grant Program. That is also federal funding and separate from ZEVIP. Their program information is located at: [CFI - Environment - FHWA \(dot.gov\)](#).

### **33. If we previously applied to WA ZEVIP for EV chargers on an interstate or US route and would like apply again, should we wait for NEVI funding?**

This round of ZEVIP only applies to state routes. Please see the NEVI response in Question 36.

### **34. How might a highway be designated a “National” EV corridor?**

FHWA designates alternative fuel corridors after considering nominations submitted through annual rounds. Please see [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/alternative\\_fuel\\_corridors/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/alternative_fuel_corridors/).

**35. Is WSDOT’s ZAP grant similar to ZEVIP?**

WSDOT’s zero-emission access program (ZAP) grant runs along a similar timeline but is a separate grant process. ZAP funding is provided for EV carshare pilot programs in underserved to low-to moderate-income communities. Please see the ZAP website for more information on that program: [Zero-emissions Access Program grant | WSDOT \(wa.gov\)](#)

**36. What funding opportunities are there for L2 charging project?**

The Washington State Department of Commerce has a number of programs that fund Level 2 charging in communities. Please subscribe to Commerce’s Agency Updates GovDelivery distribution list to receive their notifications of their open grants, loans, and Requests for Proposals: [Washington State Department of Commerce \(govdelivery.com\)](#).

**Match**

**37. Is there a minimum match requirement? Can I request 100% of project costs? How are matching funds factored into the point scoring?**

There is no minimum match requirement and applicants may request full project funding. However, applicants will rank higher in the project budget assessment if they bring a high percentage of committed match funds and the source, type, and amount of match funds are appropriate, reasonable, and committed. Five points of the budget criterion will specifically be reserved for match funding, as follows: 5 points for at least 50% match, 4 points for at least 40% match, 3 points for at least 30% match, 2 points for at least 20% match, and 1 point for at least 10% match.

**38. My agency (Pollution Liability Insurance Agency) offers loan and grant programs to contaminated gas stations to help pay for cleanup and upgrades, could those funding awards be considered for match?**

Yes, and that seems like a good opportunity for these programs to work together. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure they are meeting the requirements of all funding sources.



**39. Can this funding be combined with other state, local, or federal funding?**

There are no limitations in the ZEVIP guidelines on combining funds. Applicants are responsible for ensuring compliance with funding sources received from other agencies or programs.

**40. Can an organization submit an application with a small number of 600 kW sites for funding, with the installation of several more 100 kW sites considered as in-kind contribution?**

Yes.

**41. Can costs not considered reimbursable be considered as match? Examples include:**

- **Additional charging stations along the same corridor that have a smaller capacity**
- **Installation of CHAdeMO stations at 600 kW stations**
- **Parking lot upgrades**
- **Level 2 chargers**

CHAdeMO plugs, plug adapters, and up to two Level 2 chargers can be included in the project as eligible reimbursable expenses. Smaller capacity stations and parking lot upgrades related to the project can be considered in-kind contributions and serve as match.

**42. What is not considered an eligible match expense?**

Expenses that are not directly related to the proposed projects are not eligible as match.

**43. If the business partner provides discount or reductions can you claim that as match?**

Yes, match can be cash and/or in-kind contributions. Please include the estimate and source of any match funding and organizations that will be involved in match support. Please see the budget criteria for additional guidance.

**44. Will state monies be considered a match? Some state grants don't consider state monies a match.**

Yes, other state funding can be considered as match. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that they comply with funding sources from other agencies or programs.

## Location, corridor, site hosts

- 45. In the Grant Application Guide, it states that for EV chargers, it is not for Interstates and US Routes, but only for state routes. However in WAC 468-602-030, it states several specific Interstates, US Routes, and several specific State Routes.**

For this round of ZEVIP we are only seeking DCFC stations along state routes; although the WAC lists many corridors, it allows WSDOT to specify the priority corridors for each round of investments. We are not seeking charging sites along any interstate or US routes with this limited state funding as we anticipate a large federal investment into interstates and US routes in the next five years through the National EV Infrastructure formula program.

- 46. Do you have a list or map of the EV state routes that will be considered?**

All state routes will be considered.

- 47. The ZEV Application guide and March 9 webinar both note priority sites are “within 1 travel mile” of state routes. Does WSDOT have a required or preferred approach for validating site proximity to state routes?**

The 1 mile should be measured as the shortest driving distance from the state route exit or highway intersection to the proposed station at the time of the proposal.

- 48. We're 2 to 3 miles from the state route, will that automatically disqualify any application we make, or will there be any flexibility in that criteria?**

Applicants within 1 travel mile of the corridor will be prioritized with rare exceptions allowed. The 1 mile should be measured as the shortest driving distance from the state route exit or highway intersection to the proposed station. Exceptions from this requirement may be made where there is no electrical service or business activity within 1 mile of the highway. Examples that may support an exception include charging in disadvantaged communities, rural areas, or where grid capabilities are limited. Please include the justification for the deviation of the minimum requirement in the application.

- 49. If an EV charging project is located at the intersection of a State Route and Interstate – will it qualify?**

Yes, because of the proximity to the state route.

**50. Our EV charging site is along US 101, is it eligible?**

No, we are only seeking EV charging along state routes. WSDOT anticipates NEVI funding will fully build out all interstates and US Routes.

**51. Will single site proposals be considered, or are you seeking proposals for entire corridors?**

Single site proposals will be considered. If there is another application for stations on that same corridor that covers more of the corridor, with all other things being equal, the program prioritizes the application that has more corridor coverage through the evaluation criteria. ZEVIP prioritizes projects that complete corridors, segments of corridors, or fill gaps of corridors.

**52. Does WSDOT help select sites, or is there a match making site for landowners who would like to host a charging site and EV charging service providers? Can WSDOT identify any statewide businesses that have the capacity and proven background to accomplish a project like this?**

WSDOT does not recommend specific sites; only that the sites meet the priority corridors listed in the solicitation. Specific sites are selected by the project applicant team, which may include the grant applicant, EVSE manufacturers, charging network providers, site host, utility, contractor, etc. Prospective applicants are encouraged to research EV charging in their regional corridors to better understand what groups are active in the development of projects. Examples include a tourism bureau, non-profit organizations, or a regional transportation planning office.

During public outreach last year on our state's federal funding deployment plan, the public submitted suggested EV charging station locations on the following map: [WA Interactive Electric Vehicle Charging Map \(arcgis.com\)](#). This is a potential data source applicants may use when the project team is selecting sites. Please note that the applicant either needs to own the site or develop a site host agreement, lease, or other formal access to the site for at least five years

**53. Is there anything that makes an EV charging site most competitive? Does the number of units make a site more/less competitive?**

Please see the project evaluation section and scoring scale within the grant application guide. A project that responds fully to each criteria and requirement with a high degree of confidence in the applicant's response and proposes one more enhancing features will receive an excellent score. ZEVIP prioritizes projects that complete corridors so a proposal with more sites would rank higher than a single site, all other things being equal.

**54. Can a "corridor" be considered as a region? For instance, a major corridor and a number of arterials that feed the same geographic region but may include more than one highway. We have multiple sites along two corridors, should they be submitted as a corridor?**

All proposed EV charging stations should be located within 1 travel mile of a state route. Proposed hydrogen fueling stations should be located within 5 travel miles of the highway corridor. Yes, corridors can include regional travel corridors that combine multiple roadways that are interconnected through travel, but those roadways must all be eligible corridors. Examples include the travel corridors leading to a major tourist destination or scenic byways. Please indicate the segments of travel corridors covered in the application. A travel corridor can be submitted as one application.

**55. Should Tesla chargers and/or DCFC chargers located at dealerships be included as applicants assess chargers in 50-mile increments?**

Tesla charging stations alone are currently considered a proprietary network and do not meet the designation criteria of being publicly accessible. ZEVIP's goal is a publicly accessible 150kW DC fast charging stations spaced a maximum distance of 50 miles apart. Please document other publicly available DC fast chargers on the corridor within the application and their associated charging power, including the dealership if it meets the publicly accessible criteria of being available 24/7. One source of information for the location of existing fast chargers is the U.S. Department of Energy's [Alternative Fuels Data Center: Alternative Fueling Station Locator \(energy.gov\)](https://www.energy.gov/alternative-fuels-data-center). ZEVIP chargers may be co-located with Tesla chargers.

**56. Will you be considering stations even if there are some additional sites within 50 miles?**

**As an EV driver, many sites are broken and/or completely full.**

WSDOT's goal is to have a fast charger every 50 miles along all highway corridors. The department also recognizes that an effective corridor requires redundancy and fault tolerance, especially in high-use areas. Please describe all DC fast chargers on the corridor in the application and include an explanation on how this site benefits EV drivers by adding redundancy and creates a more dependable charging network.

**57. I would most likely be buying or leasing land for EV charging. I understand that to qualify for a grant I would need a letter of intent from the current owner. Can you confirm my understanding is correct.**

To qualify for a grant, you must first be an eligible applicant. An applicant needs to prove that they either own the site or have access to the site for the next five years. This includes agreements, licenses, and easements.

**58. Can cities and unincorporated communities work on a regional submittal?**

Yes, and it is encouraged. ZEVIP prioritizes projects that complete corridors.

**59. Please provide clarity regarding site control and access. Does this mean proof of ownership or lease or concession agreement, license or easement?**

An applicant needs to prove that they either own the site or have access to the site for the next five years. This includes agreements, licenses, and easements.

**Minimum criteria**

**60. Which tool will WSDOT use for identifying disadvantaged communities?**

There are a variety of sources an applicant can utilize to describe the communities served, and benefits to those communities, including the [Electric Vehicle Charging Justice40 Map \(arcgis.com\)](#) and the [Washington Environmental Health Disparities Map | Washington State Department of Health](#).

**61. The grant requires a large station for new EV charging, 4 ports of 150KW simultaneous charging. Along many State route corridors, this size of station may not be feasible. Will WSDOT be flexible to consider smaller station sizes on less travelled, but key State routes?**

It is important that the power per port is not below 150 kW. This will ensure WSDOT is moving toward corridor electrification to national standards. If seeking an exception, such as less than four plugs, please include the justification for the deviation from the minimum requirements in the application. Examples that may support an exception include charging in disadvantaged communities, rural areas, or where grid capabilities are limited.

**62. Could you elaborate on how the 150kW per port requirement was developed? I thought most EVs can only accept 50kW, but maybe that's changing.**

The 150kW per port is a national standard for DCFC along highway corridors.

**63. How would proposing less than 4-150 kW chargers at a site impact the proposal's score?**

With all other things being equal, a project meeting minimum power requirements will rank higher than a project not seeking minimum power requirements. Applicants not fully addressing the requirements may receive reduced scoring in the benefits and equipment criteria.

**64. How will battery integrated chargers be scored? The chargers may be able to charge 150kw or higher, but only while the battery is capable of it.**

Any type of proposal that reduces utility demand charges, offsets on-peak electricity use, or mitigates grid impacts should be featured, and will be ranked, in the innovation and suitability criteria.

**65. Is a charging station located behind a gate that is only open during normal business hours eligible to apply?**

No, sites must be publicly accessible 24/7.

**66. Can a project proponent propose more than the minimum amount of DCFC plugs?**

Yes.

**67. Software and smartphone/pad/laptop/computer apps are changing constantly. How can we determine the best company with the broadest reach and use across the platforms? Do you have a resource we could use to ascertain this information as we narrow it down?**

WSDOT cannot recommend vendors. Applicants are encouraged to use publicly available information sources to determine the best fit. There is a variety of resources available at [Home Page · Joint Office of Energy and Transportation \(driveelectric.gov\)](http://driveelectric.gov), including a rural EV toolkit.

**68. Will there be a fast track permitting process?**

Permitting timelines will vary by each agency(ies) having jurisdiction over the proposal. Applicants are encouraged to schedule pre-development and pre-applications meetings with jurisdictional agencies early in the planning process and include any meetings that have already take place in the application submittal. Please include any information related to completed meetings with agencies having jurisdiction in the readiness section.

**69. Solicitation says permits are required before award. Permits are acquired prior to construction, which is much later in the project schedule.**

There is not a requirement to have the permits prior to the award. The grant application guide requests that project proponents include a comprehensive list of permits required for the project, identifying which permits have been obtained, and timeline for obtaining those that are not yet in hand. The grant guidelines also request any information pertaining to pre-application or pre-development meetings that have occurred or are planned. This information will provide the evaluators information necessary to assess the readiness of the project to proceed.

### **Partnerships**

**70. In a public-private partnership, does the PUD have to be the site owner or can the private partner be the owner?**

Private partners can be the site owners.

**71. Could the business partner be the company which was installing and maintain the chargers?**

Yes.

**72. Is a EVSE network company eligible as a private partner?**

Yes.

**73. Is a non-profit an eligible private partner for a city application?**

Yes.

**74. Under the terms of the contract, is the public sector or nonprofit applicant obligated to maintain the equipment, if their private sector EVSE partner goes bankrupt? Is there a recommended way for nonprofits to limit their exposure to this possibility?**

Ultimately the applicant is responsible for ensuring the station is operational for the required initial five years. Ensuring the vendors meet the interoperability standards is one way to protect against stranded assets. Prospective applicants should use charging network providers with demonstrated experience or capability for at least the entire 5-year in-service requirement with plans to keep the stations in service beyond the minimum requirement.

**75. If you use the DES contract for purchasing equipment, would that be considered working with a private business because of their contacts?**

Yes, EVSE equipment manufacturers can serve as the private partner. The application will need to speak to how the private partner stands to gain indirect value from the project.

**76. Does the Private Partner need to be a Washington State business?**

The private sector partners must be located in Washington and/or registered with the Secretary of State to do business in Washington, such as:

- Corporations
- Partnerships
- Sole proprietorships
- Limited liability companies
- Business trusts
- Other legal business entities



**77. Is a private sector partner required on all proposals? Private Contribution is mentioned, is there a threshold % of private contribution?**

Yes, this funding is administered by WSDOT's public-private partnership office and every applicant needs a private sector partner that stands to gain indirect value from the project. Examples include the site host, EV supply equipment manufacturers, EV service providers, tourism destination, economic developers, and retail chains. The only requirement is that the applicant have a private partner that stands to gain indirect value from the project. There is no defined percentage contribution. Indirect value is defined in the program rules as "benefits of the project that may accrue to project participants other than for the use of the equipment."