

Summary of the TRB Cooperative Research Programs

The Transportation Research Board's Cooperative Research Programs are applied, contract research programs that develop near-term, practical solutions to problems facing transportation agencies. Additional Information on the Cooperative Research Programs may be found at: <http://www.trb.org/CRP/About/DivD.asp>

National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP)

The fiscal year 2009 program received about \$36 million and will fund approximately 20 continuing projects, 37 new projects, and possibly 3 contingency projects. Project budgets range from \$90,000 to \$800,000. For further information, contact Crawford Jencks at cjencks@nas.edu.

Project Submission

Problem statements for the NCHRP projects must come from a State DOT, AASHTO committee, or FHWA.

Selection Process

NCHRP projects are selected by the AASHTO Standing Committee on Research with assistance from the AASHTO Research Advisory Committee. Both of these committees are comprised of State DOT members.

Projects are selected with the following criteria:

- Does the proposed topic represents an immediate research need and is of interest to many states?
- Can the topic be handled effectively under in a cooperative program?
- Are similar efforts already underway or are satisfactory answers already available?
- Is there a high probability of resulting with a well-defined, implementable product?

Schedule for NCHRP

- March 25-27 – projects selected
- Mid-April – panel nominations requested
- June/July – panels selected
- July/August – first panel meetings
- September 15 – problem statement submission deadline

Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP)

The fiscal year 2008 program will spend \$9,600,000 on approximately 10-20 new projects and several continuing projects will be initiated each year. Project budgets range from \$200,000 to \$500,000. For further information, contact Chris Jenks at cjencks@nas.edu.

Project Submission

Project statements for TCRP projects may be submitted by anyone or any organization.

Selection Process

Projects are selected by the TCRP Oversight and Project Selection Committee which is composed of transit industry executives.

Projects are selected with the following criteria:

- Does the topic support FTA Strategic Objectives, and the TCRP Strategic Plan?
- Is the topic important to transit agencies?
- Is the topic researchable?
- Is the topic timely?
- Would a successful project produce significant benefits?
- Is probability of success sufficiently high?

- Does the proposed project avoid duplication of completed or ongoing research?
- Is the topic appropriate for TCRP or should it be performed elsewhere?

Schedule for TCRP

- January – next year's problem statements requested and panels selected for this year's projects
- March - first panel meetings
- June 15 – next year's problem submission deadline
- October 30 – next year's projects selected
- November – next year's panel nominations requested

Airport Cooperative Research Program (ACRP)

This program is authorized at \$10 million for fiscal year 2007. As of August 2007, 85 projects (totaling \$24 million) have been authorized. The primary emphasis of ACRP is applied research on problems shared by airport operating agencies that are not being adequately addressed by existing federal research programs. For further information, contact Chris Jenks at cjencks@nas.edu.

Project Submission

Research problem statements for ACRP may be submitted to TRB by anyone.

Selection Process

Projects are selected by an independent governing board appointed by the Secretary of the U.S. DOT.

Schedule for ACRP

- February – next year's problem statements requested
- April 30 – 2009 problem statement deadline
- July 20-21 – Projects selected for next year
- August – Panel nominations requested
- October – Panels selected
- December – first panel meetings

National Cooperative Freight Research Program (NCFRP)

\$2.9 million has been appropriated for FY2008. The oversight committee selected seven new projects for this year. NCFRP is focused on freight issues in all modes of transportation; a national research agenda and a multi-year strategic plan will be developed. Example areas: public benefits, traffic, international trade, planning, infrastructure. For further information, contact Crawford Jencks at cjencks@nas.edu.

Selection Process

An advisory committee composed of freight stakeholders, including public, private, and academic sector employees will oversee this program.

Schedule for NCFRP

- July 25 - next year's problem statements due
- Fall – program oversight committee will select research projects

Hazardous Material Cooperative Research Program (HMCRP)

HMCRP was authorized by SAFETEA-LU for fiscal years 2006 through 2009. Four projects were initiated in 2006/2007 and an additional three will be initiated in 2008/2009. For further information, contact Crawford Jencks at cjencks@nas.edu.

Schedule for HMCRP

- November – oversight committee meets

The Second Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP II)

SHRP II will focus on applied research in four areas: capacity, reliability, safety, and renewal. These four areas were identified by experts who began planning for the program in 1999. This program was authorized at approximately \$36 million annually for 4 years. For additional information, contact Neil Hawks at nhawks@nas.edu.

Schedule for SHRP II

- January – annual research plan announced
- February - 2008 first-round projects developed
- March - requests for proposals released for 2008 first-round projects
- April - proposals due for 2008 first-round projects
- June - contractors selected
- July - second-round projects developed
- September - proposals due for 2008 second-round projects
- October – 2009 annual work plan developed
- November – contractors selected for second-round projects

Special NCHRP Projects

Project 8-36, Research for the AASHTO Standing Committee on Planning

This is a quick-response research program for the states to address near-term improvements in statewide and metropolitan transportation planning and project development processes.

Lori Sundstrom

(lsundstrom@nas.edu) is the TRB staff for this project.

This project typically receives \$600,000 per year and initiates approximately 7 projects each year. Project costs range from \$25,000 to \$100,000 and timeframe of usually up to 12 months.

Proposed topic should be statewide or MPO transportation planning, economic planning, financing issues, or intermodal issues. Proposed problem statements discuss the need and application potential for State and MPO practitioners.

Schedule Project 8-36

- April – call for topics issued
- July - Proposed topics due
- August – Projects selected
- September - RFPs Sent to Task Order Contractors and projects are assigned by December
- November - Project initiated

Project 25-25, Research for the AASHTO Standing Committee on the Environment

This is a quick-response research program established to develop improvements to the analytical methods, decision-support tools, procedures, and techniques employed by

practitioners in environmental streamlining, environmental stewardship, statewide and metropolitan environmental transportation planning, program delivery, and project development. In 2008 this project will likely receive \$600,000 and the project initiates approximately 10 projects each year. Project costs range from \$25,000 to \$100,000. Nanda Srinivasan (nsrinivasan@nas.edu) is the TRB staff person for this project.

Project 20-7, Continuing Research for AASHTO Standing Committee on Highways

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Standing Committee on Highways must rule on engineering and operations policies. This quick-response research program helps the committee obtain guidance on a reasonably prompt schedule.

Suggested topics must come from AASHTO, typically one of the standing committee's many subcommittees. In 2006 this project received \$1 million and the project initiated 19 projects. Project costs range from \$25,000 to \$100,000. Nanda Srinivasan (nsrinivasan@nas.edu) is the TRB staff person for this project.

Project 20-65, Research for the AASHTO Standing Committee on Public Transportation

This is a quick-response research program established to develop improvements to the analytical methods, decision-support tools, and procedures employed by state-DOT practitioners as state involvement in public transportation continues to grow. This project typically receives \$250,000. The project has initiated 16 projects to date. Project costs range from \$20,000 to \$100,000.

Gwen Chisholm Smith

(gsmith@nas.edu) is the TRB staff person for this project.

Synthesis Studies

Under the sponsorship of the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP), the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP), and the Airport Cooperative Research Program (ACRP) TRB prepares syntheses of current practice in the highway, transit, and airport modes. These Synthesis Studies report on current knowledge and practice, in relatively compact format, without the detailed directions usually found in handbooks or design manuals. Additional Information on Synthesis Studies may be found at: <http://www.trb.org/Studies/Synthesis/Syntheses.asp> or by contacting Jon Williams at jwilliams@nas.edu. Submissions of suggested new synthesis topics can be made electronically at this same web address, at "**SUGGEST** an NCHRP or TCRP synthesis topic."

NCHRP Synthesis Studies

Typically 12 projects are programmed each year.

Topic Submission

Submissions for Synthesis studies can come from any source.

Selection Process

The following factors are considered in the selection process for synthesis topics:

- The topic should address a problem that is widespread enough to generate broad interest in the synthesis.
- The topic should be timely and critical.
- The topic is appropriate if current practice is non-uniform or inconsistent from agency to agency, or if the validity of some practices appears to be questionable.
- The quality and quantity of useful available information should indicate a need to organize and compress that which has already been learned and written on the topic.
- The topic should not be one where ongoing research or other activities in progress might be expected to render the synthesis obsolete shortly after completion.

Schedule

- February 8 - problem statement submission deadline
- May - projects selected

- July - first panel meetings begin

TCRP Synthesis

Typically 6 projects are programmed each year.

Topic Submission

Submissions for Synthesis studies can come from any source.

Selection Process

The factors considered for the TCRP Synthesis Program are essentially the same as used in the NCHRP Synthesis process.

- The problem should be widespread enough to generate broad interest in the synthesis.
- The problem should be timely and critical with respect to economic impact, safety, or social impact.
- The quality and quantity of useful available information should indicate a need to organize and compress that which has already been learned and written on the topic.
- The topic should not be one where ongoing research or other activities in progress might be expected to render the synthesis obsolete shortly after completion.

Schedule

- March 31 - problem statement submission deadline
- May - projects selected

- June - panel nomination requests issued
- July - panels selected
- August - first panel meetings begin

ACRP Synthesis Program

Typically 7 projects are programmed each year.

Project Submission

Submissions for Synthesis projects can come from any source.

Selection Process

The factors considered for the ACRP Synthesis Program are similar to those used in the NCHRP and TCRP Synthesis process.

Schedule

- October – problem statement submission deadline
- November - projects selected
- November - panel nomination requests issued
- January 2008 - panels selected
- February - first panels begin to meet