



Program Progress Performance Report for University Transportation Center at Portland State University

Submitted to: U.S. Department of Transportation
Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA)

Grant Number: DTRT12-G-UTC15

Project Title: University Transportation Center
National Institute for Transportation and Communities (NITC)

Consortia members: Portland State University (PSU), University of Oregon (UO), Oregon Institute of Technology (OIT), University of Utah (UU)

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Submitting Official: same as above

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Recipient Organization: Portland State University
PO Box 751
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Grant Period: January 2, 2012 – January 31, 2014

Reporting Period End Date: June 30, 2012

Report Term: Quarterly (first report includes two quarters)

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Dill".

1. ACCOMPLISHMENTS: What was done? What was learned?

The information provided in this section allows the RITA grants official to assess whether satisfactory progress has been made during the reporting period.

What are the major goals of the program?

The major goals for NITC as described in our application fall into five categories:

Research

- **Competitive, peer-review project selection process.** NITC projects are to be selected through an open RFP process. All faculty at the member campuses, as well as approved Faculty Associates, will be eligible to submit research, education and technology transfer project proposals responsive to our theme. The proposal evaluation process will emphasize external peer review and draw on the expertise of practitioners and researchers nationally.
- **Transportation for Livable Communities Pooled-fund research.** To help maximize implementation of U.S. DOT's commitment to livable communities, NITC's Transportation for Livable Communities Pooled-Fund Research program will provide regional and local agencies, such as metropolitan planning organizations and municipalities, more opportunity to be invested in research
- **Transportation Data for Livable Communities.** This initiative aims to create a model for data collection, management and dissemination that will foster the wider, national use of data resources collected on a local level.
- **Engaging Citizen Leaders.** This initiative will expand NITC's scope of work to reach a wide range of current and future transportation leaders. We will accomplish this in two ways. First, our competitive RFP process will include a score for community engagement; this will result in projects that achieve the first two goals. Second, we will set aside \$70,000 for projects that specifically target creating community leaders among the general public (not university students) and where community leadership is the *primary* objective, not a secondary or complementary objective to a larger research project.

Leadership

- **Shape national & international conversations on transportation research and education.** NITC faculty are well regarded nationally and internationally as leaders in their fields. They will continue to demonstrate this leadership through publishing in the top journals and presenting their work at conferences. NITC will take the concept of leadership far beyond academic circles, as evidenced by the wide

dissemination of research results in professional, technical and general publications and other media.

- **Serve on national committees and panels.** NITC faculty help address national transportation problems through volunteer leadership on TRB committees and in other positions, including journal editorial boards, national and international conference organizing committees, NSF panels, and other advisory boards. To continue and reinforce this practice, NITC will mentor our new, junior faculty to apply for committee and panel membership and recognize the activities of all faculty members.
- **Respond to needs of practitioners and policymakers.** NITC researchers have a long history of conducting research that is useful in solving the problems practitioners and decision-makers face every day. Our theme and project selection process will ensure that our research continues to address our nation's transportation problems. NITC's Director and staff will serve as points of contact for agency leaders and policymakers both regionally, statewide and nationally. When we identify needs that match the expertise of our researchers, we will make a connection. We will work with key staff at the DOT administrations (FHWA, FTA, etc.), both in Washington, D.C., and within the region, whose work relates to our theme to determine the most effective way for our researchers to learn from and inform agency activities.

Education and Workforce

- **Offer degrees and courses in multiple disciplines.** NITC will continue to offer a rich array of degrees that serve the transportation profession.
- **Provide experiential learning.** A key component of our education strategy is experiential learning, which will help attract and retain students. Our campuses will continue to provide these opportunities, and NITC will seek ways to expand them.
- **Attract and support undergraduate students.** NITC will build upon existing and effective mechanisms to expose K-12 students to transportation, attract and retain new undergraduate students to our degree programs, and involve undergraduates in our research.
- **Attract and support graduate students.** NITC will support graduate students directly through the following: Research assistantships working on projects; Dissertation fellowships for students to carry out research on surface transportation topics that fit under the NITC theme; Funds for scholarships at each campus to recruit new and retain existing high-performing students; and Funds for transportation student group activities.

- **Sponsor a student conference.** NITC will host a national student conference focusing on our theme.
- **Educate professionals.** NITC will maintain a vibrant program of seminars, workshops, professional courses and other training opportunities that provide transportation practitioners with the latest tools and techniques.

Technology Transfer

- **Move research into practice.** Moving research into practice first requires research findings that are relevant to practice. Our competitive project selection process will help ensure that we select projects that have direct implications for practitioners in the short- or long-term. In addition, we will use practitioners to help inform projects after selection and review final products. Additional efforts will include short workshops to share research results, one-page research briefs, presenting work at conferences aimed at practitioners, holding one-day conferences, funding technology transfer projects, and encouraging the commercial application of research results when possible.
- **Inform researchers.** The quality of scientific inquiry depends upon researchers sharing their findings with other researchers through the peer-review publication processes. Fellow researchers are important targets for our technology transfer program. We will accomplish this through two primary activities. First, NITC's faculty will continue to publish extensively in peer-reviewed journals. Second, OUTREC will support our faculty in presenting their work at nationally recognized academic conferences by including travel funds for each project.
- **Use innovative technologies to communicate research results.** NITC will embark on an ambitious program of sharing information through traditional and new media.

Collaboration

- **Collaborating within our consortium.** NITC's governance structure is cooperative and leadership is distributed. The Executive Committee includes one faculty member from each campus. The Executive Committee provides overall direction for the Center, makes project funding decisions, and selects Center award recipients, including student of the year. They will meet in person at least twice a year, rotating the location between campuses, and hold regular conference calls. Each Executive Committee member will be responsible for representing and supporting their respective campus

- **External collaboration.** In addition to the partnerships that occur through individual projects and the pooled-fund program, NITC will foster collaboration with a range of “end-users” of our work through an External Advisory Board.

What was accomplished under these goals?

Research

- **Competitive, peer-review project selection process.**

NITC staff, with input from the Director and Executive Committee, developed and issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) and proposal forms in March 2012. In addition to the standard proposal sections (e.g. background, methodology, schedule, etc.), the proposal forms specifically asked applicants to review the RiP and TRID databases to help ensure the relevance and usefulness of their proposal. The forms also requested a technology transfer plan. We updated our website for the on-line submission of proposals. We held open meetings at each campus (PSU, UO, OIT, UU) to explain the RFP process and answer questions from prospective principal investigators (PIs). A total of 42 proposals were submitted by the May 11, 2012 deadline, requesting \$4,659,138. Of those, 35 proposals were for research, five for education, and two for technology transfer.

Each proposal was reviewed by at least three external reviewers, usually two academic researchers and one practitioner. We used a total of 33 reviewers, with most reviewers (24) reviewing at least three proposals in their area(s) of expertise. This improves the integrity and fairness of the review process. The external review criteria mirror the NSF process, including intellectual merit, broad impacts, and budget. Each proposal was also reviewed and scored by the research program manager for the following programmatic criteria: fit with the NITC theme; transportation focus; student support/mentoring; support for untenured, tenure-track faculty; leveraging of matching funds; substantive and meaningful external collaboration; multi-disciplinary and/or multi-campus collaboration; national relevance; and equity/diversity. The Executive Committee reviewed and approved the scoring system for the programmatic criteria before it was applied. External and internal review scores were then combined (weighted 70/30) and proposals were ranked. The Executive Committee was scheduled to meet July 2, 2012 to make project selection decisions.

- **Transportation for Livable Communities Pooled-fund research.**

During the RFP process described above, NITC staff and Executive Committee members met with potential public agency partners to solicit ideas for research projects. This input will be used to generate an initial list of ideas for pooled fund projects.

- **Transportation Data for Livable Communities.** Seven of the 42 projects submitted through the RFP (above) fell into this category.
- **Engaging Citizen Leaders.** We received one proposal for this program through the RFP process. In addition, our programmatic scoring criteria gave higher points to projects that actively engaged external partners and addressed equity and diversity issues.

Leadership

- **Shape national & international conversations on transportation research and education.**
Three NITC staff attended and actively participated in the summer meeting of the Council of University Transportation Centers (CUTC).
- **Serve on national committees and panels.**
Core faculty members at the four NITC member campuses currently serve on 18 TRB committees/task forces and eight NCHRP/SHRP2/NCFRP panels.
- **Respond to needs of practitioners and policymakers.**
Prior to the RFP deadline, NITC staff and Executive Committee members met with over a dozen public agency staff in Oregon and Utah to explain the NITC funding process and solicit research needs. NITC's research program manager then matched these partners and their ideas with potential researchers. NITC staff also participated in webinars held by FHWA identifying research needs. Finally, we met with RITA and FTA staff at our UTC kick-off meeting, which included discussions regarding DOT priorities.

Education and Workforce

- **Offer degrees and courses in multiple disciplines.**
The four NITC campuses continue to offer 18 degrees in transportation and closely related fields.
- **Provide experiential learning.**
Given the start date of the NITC grant, we will start tracking performance related to university courses in fall 2012.
- **Attract and support undergraduate students.**
Given the start date of the NITC grant, we will start tracking performance related to university students in fall 2012.
- **Attract and support graduate students.**
Given the start date of the NITC grant, we will start tracking performance related to university students in fall 2012. We did meet with student leaders on the University of Utah campus to explain NITC and the opportunities through funding for student groups.

Those students are currently developing an organization plan, with the assistance of the NITC Executive Committee representative (Keith Bartholomew).

- **Sponsor a student conference.**

No activity during this reporting period. We plan to hold this conference in late 2013.

- **Educate professionals.**

The scoring criteria for the projects received via the RFP process included an assessment of the technology transfer plan proposed by the PI. Other professional development activities over the past month were under the prior UTC grant (OTREC).

Technology Transfer

- **Move research into practice.**

We included at least one practitioner as a peer reviewer for each proposal in the RFP process. This will help ensure that selected projects will be useful in practice. For education and technology transfer proposals, we requested that each PI include an educator or practitioner as an advisor during the project. All proposals were required to include a technology transfer plan. Two of the proposals focused on technology transfer. PIs must find the 100% matching funds for their proposal. This often involves support from an external partner who will be one end-user for the research. Finally, each funded project includes funds for presenting results at conferences.

- **Inform researchers.**

The technology transfer section of each proposal includes ideas from the PI on how they will share results with other researchers.

- **Use innovative technologies to communicate research results.**

We have established the required website for NITC. We are working on the site architecture and a new content management system for NITC that works with the OTREC site.

Collaboration

- **Collaborating within our consortium.**

The Executive Committee of NITC met once in person and three times on conference calls during the reporting period. NITC staff visited each campus to meet with faculty, students, and staff. We developed and finalized a Memorandum of Understanding between all four campuses regarding the operation of NITC and a master contract between PSU and each campus to facilitate the transfer of funds between the campuses.

- **External collaboration.**

The Executive Committee identified a list of candidates for the External Advisory Board. We are in the process of confirming participation and anticipate the Board to be

finalized before the next report. We have begun coordinating within Region X with the new regional center at University of Washington and the Tier 1 center based at University of Idaho. We attended the kick-off meeting for the regional center in May.

How have the results been disseminated?

Nothing to Report

What do you plan to do during the next reporting period to accomplish the goals?

Expected highlights for the next quarterly reporting period include:

- Selection of projects. Efforts will include getting project summaries on our website and RiP, reviewing project budgets, and finalizing task orders for each project to facilitate start dates in August and September.
- Convene External Advisory Board.
- Initiate the Pooled Fund process.
- Develop internal reporting system for PIs and Executive Committee members for tracking performance.

2. PRODUCTS: What has the program produced?

Publications, conference papers, and presentations

Nothing to report for this period.

Website(s) or other Internet site(s)

The NITC website is located here: <http://otrec.us/NITC>. During this reporting period the site was used to disseminate information about the RFP.

Technologies or techniques

Nothing to report for this period.

Inventions, patent applications, and/or licenses

Nothing to report for this period.

Other products

Nothing to report for this period.

3. PARTICIPANTS & OTHER COLLABORATING ORGANIZATIONS: Who has been involved?

What individuals have worked on the program?

Table 1 and Table 2 including information about individuals who worked directly on the NITC program during the reporting period.

Table 1: Individuals Who Have Worked on the Program, NITC Staff

Name	Jennifer Dill	Hau Hagedorn	Jon Makler	Justin Carinci	Carol Wallace
Program/Project Role	NITC Director	Research Program Manager	Education & Technology Transfer Manager	Communications Director	Fiscal Coordinator
Number of hours worked during the reporting period	157	254	68	87	218
Contribution to Program/Project	Overall program direction; review of RFP and proposal forms; meetings on each campus; outreach to community partners; coordination with PSU fiscal administrators	Develop and implement the RFP process; respond to inquiries from PIs; work with potential partners to find campus researchers; meetings on each campus	Identify and recruit Board of Advisors; Work with Exec. Comm. members on plans for education and technology transfer	Develop website; meet with new campus partners (Utah); develop outreach materials on NITC	Work on financial agreements and processes; meet with new campus partners (Utah); develop new financial reporting forms; answer inquiries about proposal budgets
Funding Support	These activities during this time period were funded by the RITA UTC grant	These activities during this time period were funded by the RITA UTC grant	These activities during this time period were funded by the RITA UTC grant	These activities during this time period were funded by the RITA UTC grant	These activities during this time period were funded by the RITA UTC grant
Collaborated with individual in foreign country	No, not for NITC	No	No	No	No
Travelled to foreign country	No, not for NITC	No	No	No	No

Table 2: Individuals Who Have Worked on the Program, NITC Executive Committee

Name	Marc Schlossberg, Univ. of Oregon	Keith Bartholomew, Univ. of Utah	Kelly Clifton, PSU	Roger Lindgren, OIT
Program/Project Role	Executive Committee member	Executive Committee member	Executive Committee member	Executive Committee member
Number of hours worked during the reporting period	80	120	60	60
Contribution to Program/Project	Participated in Exec. Comm. meetings and meeting with RITA; reviewed and provided input on draft RFP and scoring criteria; assisted faculty on campus who were developing proposals; hosted open meeting on campus for NITC staff to meet with faculty and administrative staff; assisted in getting MOU and contract in place	Participated in Exec. Comm. meetings and meeting with RITA; reviewed and provided input on draft RFP and scoring criteria; assisted faculty on campus who were developing proposals; hosted open meeting on campus for NITC staff to meet with faculty and administrative staff; assisted in getting MOU and contract in place; worked with student groups; coordinated activities among departments and with Regional UTC	Participated in Exec. Comm. meetings and meeting with RITA; reviewed and provided input on draft RFP and scoring criteria; assisted faculty on campus who were developing proposals; hosted open meeting on campus for NITC staff to meet with faculty	Participated in Exec. Comm. meetings and meeting with RITA; reviewed and provided input on draft RFP and scoring criteria; assisted faculty on campus who were developing proposals; hosted open meeting on campus for NITC staff to meet with faculty and administrative staff; assisted in getting MOU and contract in place
Funding Support	Univ. of Oregon	Univ. of Utah	PSU	OIT
Collaborated with individual in foreign country	No, not for NITC	No	No	No
Travelled to foreign country	No, not for NITC	No	No	No

What other organizations have been involved as partners?

The members of the consortium include Portland State University, University of Oregon, Oregon Institute of Technology, and University of Utah. Each NITC-funded project is required to have 100% match. The next quarterly report will include a list of the matching partners for the selected projects.

Have other collaborators or contacts been involved?

NITC included four faculty associates at other campuses (Oregon State University, University of Michigan, University of Minnesota, and UC Davis) to supplement our expertise. Two of these associates submitted project proposals in the RFP process.

During the RFP process, NITC staff and Executive Committee members met with over a dozen public agencies to explain our RFP process and solicit research ideas, including the Oregon and Utah Departments of Transportation, FHWA, cities of Portland and Salt Lake City, MPOs in Oregon and Utah, TriMet, and the Utah Transit Authority.

NITC also worked closely with financial and research staff on each campus to establish new agreements and processes for collaboration.

We began coordinating within Region X with the new regional center at University of Washington and the Tier 1 center based at University of Idaho. We also discussed a potential collaboration with the transit center based at San Jose State University.

4. IMPACT: What is the impact of the program? How has it contributed to transportation education, research, and technology transfer?

What is the impact on the development of the principal discipline(s) of the program?

Nothing to Report for this period.

What is the impact on other disciplines?

Nothing to Report for this period.

What is the impact on the development of transportation workforce development?

Nothing to Report for this period.

What is the impact on physical, institutional, and information resources at the university or other partner institutions?

Nothing to Report for this period.

What is the impact on technology transfer?

Nothing to Report for this period.

What is the impact on society beyond science and technology?

Nothing to Report for this period.

5. CHANGES/PROBLEMS

Changes in approach and reasons for change

Nothing to Report for this period.

Actual or anticipated problems or delays and actions or plans to resolve them

Nothing to Report for this period.

Changes that have a significant impact on expenditures

Nothing to Report for this period.

Significant changes in use or care of human subjects, vertebrate animals, and/or biohazards

Nothing to Report for this period.

Change of primary performance site location from that originally proposed

Nothing to Report for this period.

Additional information regarding Products and Impacts

Nothing to Report for this period.