

In its over 45 years of existence, the Transportation Pooled Fund (TPF) Program has enabled public and private entities to combine resources to conduct high-priority transportation research. By pooling funds and expertise, participants develop innovative solutions at a lower cost while extending the reach and impact of their research.

**Over 750 successful projects have been launched.**

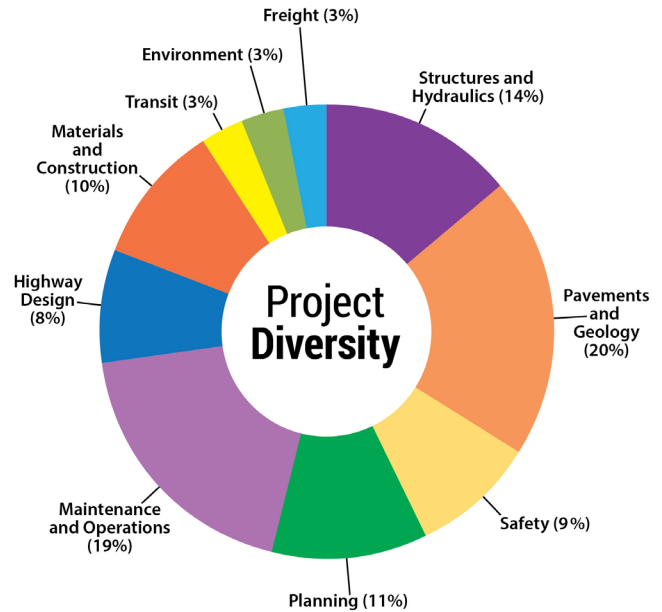
### Who Can Partner in a TPF Program?

Studies must be initiated and led by either the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or a State department of transportation (DOT). To help find study partners, the lead agency posts its proposed topic on the TPF Program website. In addition to State DOTs and FHWA, other Federal agencies, regional and local agencies, academic institutions, professional associations, and private industry can join the study as partners by pledging funds or other resources.

Past studies have had as few as 2 participants, while others have attracted more than 40. Once a study is underway, the lead agency contracts for the research, administers the project, and convenes a technical advisory committee of representatives from each project partner. TPF Program studies have a maximum duration of 5 years. If the research needs to continue after the 5-year period, a new solicitation and project on the same topic can be generated.

### Combine Resources and Share the Benefits

Collaboration between TPF Program participants eliminates duplicative research efforts, allowing for more efficient use of funds. The TPF lead agency manages the contract-related and funding issues for the project, allowing other members to focus on the study's content. This leveraging of resources enables some agencies to participate in large-scale research efforts that would otherwise not be feasible.



Source: FHWA. The pie chart above shows the TPF projects based on their focus.

For State DOTs, TPF Program studies are typically funded with State Planning and Research (SP&R) funds. State DOTs use SP&R funds to carry out transportation studies as well as research, development, and technology (RD&T) transfer activities. SP&R is often a State DOT's only source of funds to conduct RD&T activities.

Beyond its funding and administrative advantages, the variety of expertise and experience brought together for a TPF study can have a much broader impact. The TPF Program focuses on national- and regional-related transportation research, planning, and technology transfer activities in a range of categories, including pavements, bridges, design, safety, administration, environment, security, and maintenance. The following studies illustrate the important work of the TPF Program.

**Fostering Innovation in Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation**

Transportation agencies across the Nation are seeking ways to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety and mobility. There has been a rapid rise in the demand for research on a wide variety of pedestrian and bicycle issues in many different settings and situations. Addressing this demand, FHWA is collaborating with 14 State DOTs through an active TPF study called Fostering Innovation and Bicycle Transportation Pooled Fund Study that supports short-term pedestrian- and bicyclist-related safety research. The study is using the combined \$945,000 in project funding to focus on bicycle and pedestrian network planning, safety, design issues, traffic control devices, and other relevant issues. Learn more about this project at <https://pooledfund.org/Details/Study/622>.<sup>(1)</sup>

**Autonomous Maintenance Technology Pooled Fund**

Technologies for autonomous and connected vehicles are rapidly improving. Drawing on this technological advancement, the Colorado DOT is leading an active TPF study called Autonomous Maintenance Technology (AMT) to develop autonomous technologies for roadway work zone applications. The 15 State DOTs involved in the TPF study are able to use the combined \$1 million of project funding to improve the safety, efficiency, and quality of roadway work. This project will also provide a better understanding of real-world applications of autonomous and connected vehicle technology. Learn more about this project at <https://pooledfund.org/Details/Study/632>.<sup>(2)</sup>



© www.pedbikeimages.org / Chicago Department of Transportation. This photo demonstrates several bicycle and pedestrian safety solutions.

**References**

1. National Cooperative Highway Research Program. 2019. “Fostering Innovation in Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Pooled Fund Study” (web page). <https://pooledfund.org/Details/Study/622>, last accessed January 6, 2021.
2. National Cooperative Highway Research Program. 2019. “Autonomous Maintenance Technology (AMT)” (web page). <https://pooledfund.org/Details/Study/632>, last accessed January 6, 2021.
3. National Cooperative Highway Research Program. 2023. “TPF: Transportation Pooled Fund” (website). <https://www.pooledfund.org/>, last accessed January 6, 2021.

Publication No.: FHWA-HRT-24-048  
 HRTM-10/12-23(Web)E  
<https://doi.org/10.21949/1521482>



**Make an Impact Through a TPF Study!**

The TPF Program is a great resource to combine limited funds to address important transportation issues. Learn more about initiating a TPF study and browse the list of open solicitations on the TPF website at <https://www.pooledfund.org/>.<sup>(3)</sup>

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