

CAGTC Member Consultants Weigh In: What Makes an INFRA Application Successful?

CAGTC's membership includes a number of consulting firms and practitioners that prepare competitive grant applications in cooperation with public agencies. Individuals from those firms were invited to respond to a CAGTC-produced survey in October 2018. Survey responses were submitted anonymously. A list of CAGTC members who provide these services is included in this newsletter.

Time spent preparing an application:

80-320
hours

Number of hours varied depending on the client's preparedness level, the type of project, and:

- Size of project
- Available data
- Economic analyses
- BCA development
- Graphics
- Coordinated planning with stakeholders
- Feasibility studies

Before applying, projects should consider:

- Project readiness
- Matching funds
- Project definition
- Available data & analytics tools
- Performance goals
- Alignment with grant program goals
- Stakeholder support
- Partnerships
- Innovative procurement methods

All successful applications have _____ in common:

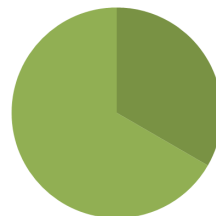
- Support from elected officials (i.e., State Governor, U.S. Senator)
- Clearly identified champions
- Early consultation among the grant writing team
- Innovative elements
- A strong, but concise, sales pitch

Project Complexity

1/2 of respondents said less complex projects are more successful under the current Administration's INFRA grant program, especially due to the increased focus on rural grants

1/2 of respondents said complex projects must concisely communicate project benefits and have a strong BCA; with a good write up, they can be successful

All respondents said there is some level of politicization in the INFRA grant selection process.



2/3 said the politicization is getting worse
1/3 said it is difficult to gauge if it is getting better or worse

4/5

said USDOT debriefs were constructive

1/5

said USDOT debriefs were not constructive