

# TPF Overview

The Transportation Pooled Fund (TPF) program, an innovative initiative established more than 45 years ago, is pivotal in advancing safety, efficiency, connectivity, and innovation in transportation research. By pooling funds and expertise, participants develop advanced solutions at a lower cost, moving innovation forward and improving public safety for the traveling public.

The program includes projects initiated and led by the Federal Highway Administration or State departments of transportation. To foster collaboration, the lead agency posts proposed research topics on the TPF Program website, inviting participation from a diverse range of stakeholders, including private industry, Federal agencies, regional and local agencies, academic institutions,

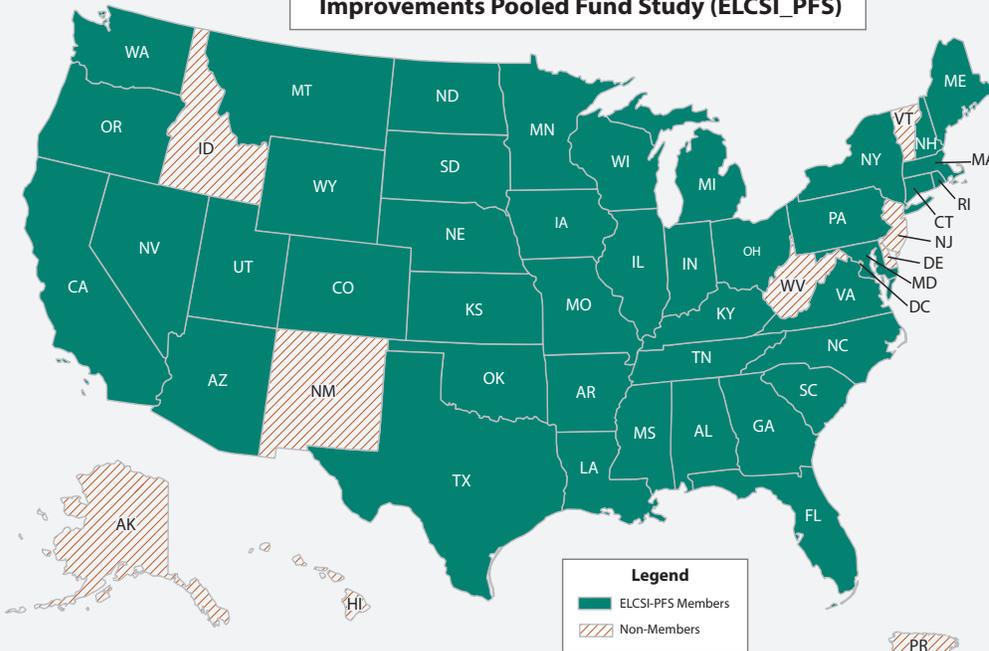
and professional associations who can contribute funds or resources.

Participation in TPF studies varies, with past projects involving as few as 2 partners and as many as 45, demonstrating the program’s flexibility and collaborative nature. Once a study begins, the lead agency manages contractual and funding responsibilities, which allows participants to focus on research content through a technical advisory committee comprising representatives from each partner.

One notable study under the TPF program is the Evaluation of Low-Cost Safety Improvements (ELCSI), which aims to create effective safety countermeasures that mitigate risks on U.S. roadways for those with budgets

of all sizes. The study has successfully identified and implemented high-impact safety solutions, such as retroreflective tape and optimal sign heights, which may not always be visible to the public but have been proven to significantly reduce crashes and save lives. A notable project within the ELCSI study is the “Pavement Safety Performance” project, which explores different treatment methods—such as chip seal and high-friction surfaces—particularly focused on enhancing safety at horizontal curves where approximately 25 percent of highway fatalities occur. The study has contributed over 800 crash modification factors that showcase the effectiveness of these low-cost safety measures, showcasing their critical role in improving road safety nationwide.

**43 Members of the Evaluation of Low-Cost Safety Improvements Pooled Fund Study (ELCSI\_PFS)**

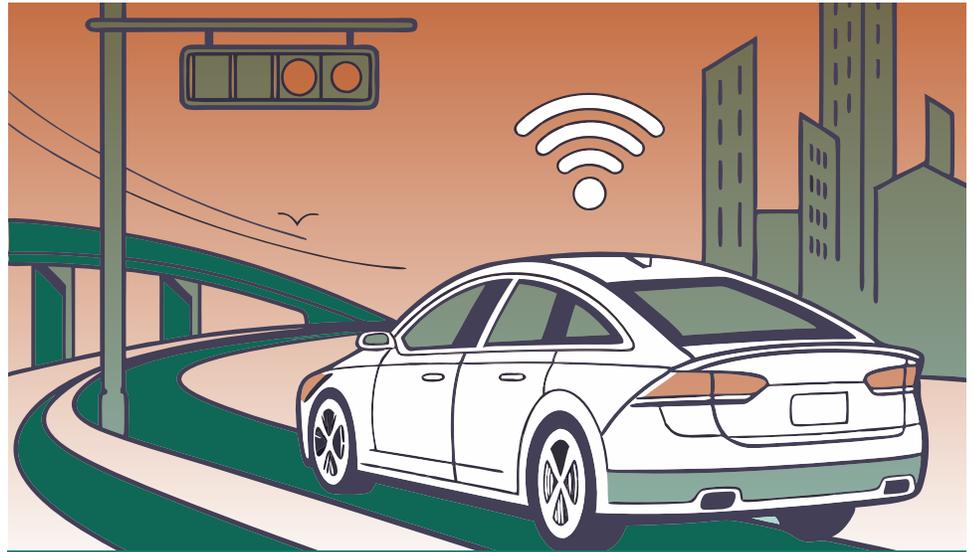


The ELCSI study has contributed more than 800 crash modification factors (CMF) detailing the effectiveness of these low-cost safety measures, showcasing their critical role in improving road safety nationwide.

With over 43 partner agencies, the ELCSI study boasts the most members of all the TPF studies.

Source: FHWA.

Another significant initiative is the Human-Centered Steel Bridge Inspection study, which addresses the limitations of traditional bridge inspection methods. This research, led by the Kansas Department of Transportation, focuses on enhancing bridge inspections by integrating computer vision and artificial intelligence technologies. These innovations facilitate real-time detection of structural defects, such as fatigue cracks and corrosion. The project also leverages augmented reality tools, including headsets and tablet devices, to improve inspection accuracy and efficiency. Furthermore, using unmanned aerial vehicles for remote inspections supports a human-centered approach, ultimately enhancing the safety and reliability of bridge assessments.



© stock.adobe.com/WebCoder. Edited by FHWA. The Connected Vehicle Pooled Fund Study aims to create a seamless connection between vehicles and infrastructure.

Lastly, the Connected Vehicle Pooled Fund Study is dedicated to advancing connected vehicle technologies within the transportation system. This initiative aims to create a seamless connection between vehicle and infrastructure components, thereby improving overall transportation efficiency and safety. By focusing on integrated technology, the study seeks to reduce congestion, enhance traveler services, and improve safety outcomes. It engages stakeholders in extensive research, development, and evaluation of connected vehicle applications, ensuring that best practices and standards are communicated effectively to State and local agencies.

Through these initiatives and many others, the TPF program exemplifies a commitment to fostering collaboration and innovation in addressing contemporary transportation challenges. By pooling resources and expertise, TPF minimizes redundancies in research efforts and significantly amplifies the impact of its studies. The program’s focus encompasses various categories, including safety, design, pavements, bridges, and maintenance, ultimately striving to enhance safety, connectivity, and efficiency across the Nation’s transportation landscape.

## 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/>.

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