Road to Zero Accepting Grant Nominations

Road to Zero is now accepting applications for the 2019 Safe System Innovation Grants! These annual grants are distributed to organizations with creative and robust strategies for addressing traffic deaths in the communities in which they live, work and play.

To qualify, an organization must clearly explain how its program will reduce roadway fatalities, set a time frame for the reduction, outline how the program will be evaluated, detail how the organization intends to reach its target audience and list the funds requested.

Each application will be reviewed and rated on the same criteria by four separate grant readers. Grant winners will be announced in March. You can view 2017 and 2018 grant winners here.

Take a Stand for Safety

The Road to Zero Coalition develops Safety Priority Statements that outline the Coalition’s position on important roadway safety issues and identifies strategies for mitigating risks. All Coalition members are invited to “sign on” to Safety Priority Statements and pursue the identified strategies to reduce roadway fatalities.

The following Safety Priority Statements were developed by Coalition members:

- Truck Underride Priority Statement
- Occupant Restraint Priority Statement
- Automated Speed Enforcement Priority Statement
- Alcohol-Impaired Driving Priority Statement

Any Coalition member can propose a Safety Priority Statement. The above statements serve as a model, and Coalition members interested in advancing additional Safety Priority Statements are encouraged to work with the Steering Group or Jane Mellow to propose new statements.

Do you want to know more, or have your Priority Statement reviewed for consideration? Email all questions or draft priority statements to RoadToZero@nsc.org.

News from the Hill

The 116th Session of U.S. Congress began on Jan. 3. With Democrats regaining the House of Representatives and Republicans expanding their advantage in the Senate in the November elections, bipartisan cooperation will be key to advancing a legislative agenda. Roadway priorities for this Congress are expected to include:

- A continued push for infrastructure investment
• The commencement of work on a transportation reauthorization bill, including potential funding for safety priorities

With this new Congress also comes new committee leadership. In the Senate, Roger Wicker (R-MS) will lead the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, with Maria Cantwell (D-WA) serving as ranking member. In the House, Peter DeFazio (D-OR) will lead the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, with Sam Graves (R-MO) serving as ranking member.

As always, we encourage you to engage with your federal, state and local elected officials and educate them on the Road to Zero vision and the need to prioritize and invest in safety. Our efforts are strongest when we all pull in the same direction together to reduce fatalities and injuries on the roads.

Drive Safely in the Dark

As we face shorter days, many people will find themselves spending more time driving in the dark. Compromised night vision, extended rush hour traffic and impaired drivers all contribute to making driving at night more dangerous than any other time of day. In fact, the risk of a fatal crash is three times greater at night, according to National Safety Council research. Even with high-beam headlights on, visibility is limited to about 500 feet, giving drivers less time to react to hazards. Make sure you get enough sleep and slow down to create greater safety margins. Find more tips for staying safe behind the wheel at night at nsc.org/NightDriving.

In the Know

AMVAA released best practice updates on ignition interlocks, as well as guidance to reduce the number of license suspensions and revocations. See the best practice and guidance updates here and here.

The CDC released its 2017 mortality data showing that U.S. life expectancy has dropped, in part because unintentional, preventable injuries – including motor vehicle crashes – are claiming an unprecedented number of lives each year. National Safety Council researchers broke down the unintentional injury data by type, and called on Americans and elected officials to prioritize safety. Visit nsc.org/newsroom to view the statement and data.

The Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility (FAAR) has launched a new program for prosecutors. The free online course developed by FAAR (Responsibility.org), alongside the National Center for State Courts and the National Association of District Attorney’s National Traffic Safety Law Center, targets practicing and new prosecutors and will qualify for CLE credit in many states. It provides knowledge and trial tips to assist prosecutors in effectively adjudicating complex impaired driving cases. Broaden your skill set in prosecuting impaired driving offenses today and access the course from the Responsibility.org website here.

Just over half of 2018 model vehicles IIHS evaluated are available with headlights that do an adequate job of lighting the road at night and limiting glare for oncoming drivers, but most good-rated headlights are optional or bundled with features that can raise the price of the vehicle. Since the Institute released its first headlight ratings for passenger vehicles in 2016, most manufacturers have focused on improving this key safety component. For the 2018 model year, the best-available headlights on 32 of 165 models evaluated earn the highest rating of good, and the best-available headlights on 58 models earn the second-highest rating of acceptable. Thirty-two models have only marginal-rated headlights, while poor-rated headlights are the only ones available for 43 models. Read the full press release and findings here.
The National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine released a report in early December showing the future of the U.S. interstate highway system is in grave danger, threatened by a “backlog of structural and operational deficiencies, and by various looming challenges.” According to a press release issued Dec. 5, the country needs “a 20-year ‘blueprint for action,’ which includes creating an ‘Interstate Highway System Renewal and Modernization Program,’ increasing the federal fuel tax to help pay for it, and allowing tolls and per-mile-charges on more interstate routes.” Read the report here.

The Road to Zero Communications Toolkit has been updated to reflect changes in leadership, new Steering Group members, and information about the Road to Zero report. Visit nsc.org/roadtozero to download the latest edition of the kit and learn how to promote your Road to Zero membership.

We can feature your news as well. To submit news, announcements or updates for inclusion in the Road to Zero newsletter, email your message to roadtozero@nsc.org. Include all relevant details, links, names, etc. and any special notes regarding the announcement.

Road to Zero 2.0

At the December Coalition meeting, we rolled out Road to Zero 2.0. Collectively, we spent the first two years building the coalition (which now has more than 800 member organizations) and commissioning a report about how to get from where we are today – with more than 40,000 annual traffic fatalities – to our goal of zero. In 2019 we will begin implementing the report, A Road to Zero: A vision for achieving zero roadway deaths by 2050.

As we move forward, the Road to Zero Coalition will create three working groups, organized around the three pillars in the report. Three coalition members have agreed to lead these working groups:

- Doubling down on what works - Dia Gainor, National Association of State Emergency Medical Service Officials
- Accelerating advanced technology - David Harkey, Insurance Institute for Highway Safety
- Prioritizing safety - Jeff Paniati, Institute of Transportation Engineers

As we move into this implementation phase, the cadence of our meetings will shift as well. The quarterly meetings will shift to one or two meetings per year for the whole coalition, but the working groups will schedule additional meetings, calls or activities to support their efforts.

As the working groups organize, we will send out information about their activities and how coalition members can participate.

Closing Out 2018

The Road to Zero December Coalition meeting kicked off with a welcome by National Safety Council CEO Debbie Hersman. She announced that she will be leaving NSC and stepping down as Road to Zero Chair in January. Nick Smith, Chief Operating Officer at NSC, will serve as interim president and CEO at NSC and as interim Chair of the Road to Zero Coalition. Debbie introduced Jane Mellow, who is the new manager of the Road to Zero Coalition.
Beth Alicandri, Associate Administrator for Safety at the Federal Highway Administration, gave opening remarks about the vision and path forward for the Road to Zero Coalition.

Terrence Cunningham, Deputy Executive Director/Chief Operating Officer of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) laid out an overview of the law enforcement perspective in traffic safety and enforcement. He was followed by an excellent panel moderated by Domingo Herraiz, Director of Programs for IACP. Chief Daniel Sharp of Ora Valley, Arizona, talked about their high visibility enforcement program designed to reduce traffic fatalities. Kyle Clark with IACP’s Drug Evaluation Classification Program talked about challenges in their efforts to stop drugged driving. Judge Earl Penrod gave an animated overview of the judicial role in traffic safety.

The group also heard from the three working group co-chairs about plans to implement the RTZ report. The working groups will be organized around the three pillars in the report: Doubling Down on What Works, Accelerating Advanced Technology, and Prioritizing Safety. Alex Epstein, director of transportation at NSC, discussed plans to survey the Road to Zero membership to gauge interest in various activities. The meeting closed with a farewell from Debbie.

Thank you to all who attended in person and via webcast.