

ORIL Frequently Asked Questions

(Last updated on 09/09/2013. Check back for future updates.)

Question: I work for an engineering firm, but have been contracted by a city to serve as their city engineer. Can I submit an idea to ORIL? **(NEW!)**

Answer: Yes. Ideas can be submitted by representatives of Local Public Agencies (e.g.: municipalities, counties, townships, MPOs or RPO.). If you are an employee of an engineering firm (e.g.: consultant) who has been hired by a local public agency (e.g.: municipality) to serve in a technical capacity (e.g.: city engineer), you may submit an idea on behalf of the city. As an idea submitter, you would be ineligible to submit a proposal (through your firm) to conduct the research.

Question: What can ORIL funds be used for?

Answer: ORIL funds can be used to conduct and support research activities focused on local transportation issues. ORIL funds cannot be used to make general capital improvements (e.g.: construct sidewalks, widen a lane, etc.) or perform standard maintenance tasks (e.g.: resurface pavements, inspect bridges, etc.). While ORIL funds can be used to investigate and identify methods to make these types of activities more efficient and/or effective, ORIL funds cannot be used to perform these tasks as part of standard work.

Question: What is research?

Answer: Research is a systematic, controlled inquiry involving analytical and experimental activities with the purpose of increasing the understanding of a topic or solving a problem.

Question: Where does the ORIL money come from?

Answer: Funding for ORIL is provided through ODOT's Statewide Planning and Research Part 2 (SP&R2) Program, a.k.a.: Research. SP&R2 funds are provided at a ratio of 80% federal with a 20% match, currently provided by the State of Ohio.

Question: So does ORIL actually give (or transfer) funds to locals?

Answer: No. ORIL funds are used to cover expenses incurred by contracted researchers who are selected by the ORIL Board to conduct research activities on transportation topics of interest to locals.

Question: How do I apply for ORIL funding?

Answer: Since locals do not receive funds directly from ORIL (see question above), locals do not "apply for funding." Locals submit research ideas for the ORIL Board to consider developing into research projects. To submit an idea, locals should complete an idea form, which is available online (<http://oril.transportation.ohio.gov>). The idea forms may be completed and submitted online or a PDF version can be downloaded, completed and either emailed to ORIL@dot.state.oh.us or faxed to 614-995-7047.

The ORIL Board solicits locals for research ideas once a year starting in September and lasting through October. During an idea solicitation period, deadline dates will be posted on the ORIL website.

Question: If I submit an idea to ORIL for consideration and my idea is selected what will be required of me?

Answer: Typically submitters of ideas selected by the ORIL Board for project development are requested to participate on the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for that project. TACs are groups of individuals who have (1) a vested interest in the research topic, (2) the technical expertise to provide oversight and direction to a researcher conducting the project, and (3) the time and willingness to commit to being

involved on a research project. TACs typically are comprised of at least 3 individuals: (1) the idea submitter, (2) an ORIL Board member, and (3) and ODOT technical staff member. Additional details on the roles and responsibilities of TACs are available in the [ORIL Guidebook](#).

Question: How is ORIL different from ODOT’s Research Program?

Answer: ORIL focuses its research efforts on issues that directly impact the local transportation system (e.g.: county and township roads) while ODOT’s Research program tends to focus on the state system (e.g.: interstates, US and state routes). Considering that 84% of the state’s centerline miles are under the jurisdiction of locals (e.g.: counties, cities, villages, and townships), expanding research to focused on enhancing these assets ultimately improves Ohio’s entire transportation system.

Question: How do I join the ORIL Board?

Answer: ORIL Board representatives for local agencies are selected by their respective associations. Academic representatives are selected through an open call for applications that is coordinated by ODOT’s Research Section. ODOT technical staff representatives are selected through an open nomination process that is coordinated by ODOT’s Research Section. Standard term limits for Board members are set at 4 years. The below table provides the point of contact for each board member type as well as the next available term.

Board Member	Organization to Contact	Term Opening
County Engineers	County Engineers Association of Ohio	2 positions opening in December 2014
City Engineers	Ohio Municipal League	2 positions opening in December 2014
Township Engineer	Ohio Township Association	1 position opening in December 2016
ODOT Technical Staff	ODOT - Office of Statewide Planning & Research	2 positions opening in December 2014
Academia	ODOT - Office of Statewide Planning & Research	2 positions opening in December 2014

Question: How can I conduct research for ORIL? Do I have to be on a prequalified list?

Answer: ORIL does not prequalify researchers for their projects. Once a year, ORIL will post an open-bid Request for Proposals. Any transportation researcher may submit a proposal for consideration. Selection is based on best-qualified to conduct the research. For additional information on the selection process, including the proposal review form used by TACs to evaluate proposals, refer to the [ORIL Guidebook](#).