



Frequently Asked Questions

SRTS Local Match Requirement

Q: What is a local match and why is it required?

A: "Local match" is a term for the resources (either funds or in-kind services or equipment) that the local sponsor contributes to the project.

Previously, SRTS funds were "100%", so no local match was required. Due to a change in funding rules at the federal level, VDOT has changed its policy to require the local sponsor to provide a match. With this requirement, VDOT provides 80% of the total project cost and the sponsor provides 20%. This is often referred to as an "80/20 match" and is in-line with most other transportation funding programs.

There are two different types of match that a local sponsor can provide: **cash** or **in-kind**.

A **cash match** is used when the local sponsor provides the match with their own money. As SRTS is a reimbursement program, the local sponsor pays for the expenses up front. When it comes time to be reimbursed by VDOT, the sponsor requests reimbursement for only 80% of their expenses. The remaining 20% is their "cash match."

In-kind match is used when an outside organization donates eligible services or equipment for the project that would otherwise have to be purchased. The value of the donation is considered part of the project cost and can be used to cover the sponsor's portion, up to 20% of total project costs.

Any donated funds used for the project would be considered a cash match, not in-kind.

Q: Who is required to provide a local match in the 2021-2022 school year?

A: The project sponsor is required to match if the school division their grant supports has already received funding for at least three non-infrastructure grants through the VDOT SRTS Non-Infrastructure Program (Note: This does not include mini-grants).



Q: What if the project sponsor is different, or different schools are included? Do I still need to provide a match?

A: Yes, regardless of the sponsor or individual schools involved, if the school division is the beneficiary of three or more non-infrastructure grants, a match is required for all subsequent SRTS non-infrastructure grants.

Q: How much is the minimum required local match?

A: The minimum required local match is 20% of the Total Project Cost (TPC) – which is the total value of all of the money, goods and services used to complete the project.

TPC = grant amount + the local match amount and cannot exceed \$125,000.

For example:

- If Total Project Cost = \$125,000, then local match = \$25,000.
- If Total Project Cost = \$50,000, then local match = \$10,000

If you want to determine the minimum local match based on your grant amount (the amount provided by VDOT), multiply your grant amount by 25% (0.25).

For example:

- If grant amount = \$100,000, then local match = \$25,000 (TPC = \$125,000)
- If grant amount = \$40,000, then local match = \$10,000 (TPC = \$50,000)

See the Safe Routes to School Grant Program Guidelines for more information about Local Match requirements.

Q: Is there a difference in the requirements for documenting normal expenses versus in-kind services or materials for the local match?

A: In both cases, you will need to provide a receipt or statement that shows what the item or service is and how much it costs. For a normal expense, you would also need to show proof of payment. For a donated item or service, you would need to provide a statement indicating that it was donated.



Once it's established that all of the expenses and donations provided in your receipt or statement are eligible, VDOT will reimburse you for 80% of the total amount shown, not to exceed 100% of your actual expenditures. Any in-kind match that exceeds 20% of the expenditures will be "banked" and applied to your next reimbursement request.

Important: You are required to show and document all of your project expenses, including any expenses you plan to use as in-kind match, not just the 80% for which you expect to be reimbursed.

Q: What types of things can be used as an in-kind match?

A: Anything that is an eligible expense (i.e. is otherwise eligible for reimbursement) can be used to meet the match requirement, including:

- Equipment and supplies used for SRTS activities
- Educational materials
- Promotional and incentive items (less than \$10 each)
- Printing, copying and postage
- Consultant services including planning, evaluation and associated education and training
- Administrative expenses related to the coordinator position (up to the eligible amount)

Note that overhead expenses are ineligible for reimbursement or as a match. All in-kind match items must be pre-approved as part of the grant application process.

Q: What if I have administrative expenses that exceed the amount eligible for reimbursement by the grant? Could I use that additional amount as a local match?

A: That will be allowed, on a case by case basis, in cases where the applicant is otherwise unable to meet the required match. However, a portion of the application score is based on the applicant's ability to meet the match requirement. Those applications that include funds that would not otherwise be reimbursable will lose points on the application score.

Q: Can I use a discount provided by a business on an eligible expense as a match?

A: No, discounts cannot be applied as a match. In those cases, the price paid will represent the eligible expense, even if it is below the market value of the good. To use the full market value of the good as a match, it must be a full and clear donation or purchase.



Instead, you could try working with the vendor to receive a portion of your order for free, equal to value of the discount. For example, instead of offering a 20% discount, a vendor would provide the 5th item free with the purchase of 4 items at full price. That way, you get credit for the portion that you paid as well as the portion that was donated.

Q: What kinds of funds can I use (or not use) for my match?

A: Ineligible funds include all state and federal transportation funds, even those that typically allow non-infrastructure activities. This includes TAP (Transportation Alternative Program) grants, Revenue Sharing funds, CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality) funds, etc.

Most other funding types are eligible, but it depends on the rules attached to the funding source. Non-transportation federal and state funds, such as community development block grants, are generally eligible. Of course, local funds are eligible, from both the school and the local government, as well as donated funds.

Q: Where can I find funds to use as a match?

A: The simplest form of the local match is using your own money, assuming it is available. Any money raised through fundraisers or other donations can also be used towards your match.

If you are interested in securing a grant, the best place to start would be with your organization or partnering school division's grant writer, if they have one. He or she would be the best source of information about available grants that would meet your needs, and how to apply.