

## Problem Statements Due Nov. 1

Every July, AASHTO R&I invites the submission of research problem statements from state DOTs, AASHTO committee and council chairs, and FHWA. Due November 1 each year, problem statements should explain why the research represents an immediate need. The proposed research should have a high probability of success and should not duplicate other research.

### RESOURCES:

[Problem Statement Template](#)  
[Resources on Writing Problem Statements](#)

## Program Approval

At its April meeting, R&I allocates funds for new and continuation projects. Once the program is developed, NCHRP sends the selected program to AASHTO; AASHTO prepares a ballot and asks the AASHTO Board of Directors for approval. Each project must receive a yes vote from at least two-thirds of the members of the Board of Directors and must be approved by FHWA and accepted by the National Academies.

## Evaluation and Program Formulation

From November through February, NCHRP receives comments on the problem statements from AASHTO, FHWA, and NCHRP staff. In February, NCHRP sends these comments and the problem statements to AASHTO R&I and RAC for review. Those committees rate each of the candidates according to need, value, and appropriateness. The results help establish a preliminary ranking to structure the discussion of candidates by R&I at its April meeting.

## Panel Formulation

Each research project is assigned to a volunteer panel of experts who provide technical guidance and counsel throughout the research and reporting phases. Panel members do not act as consultants or advisors to project investigators, may not submit proposals for research, and serve without compensation. Panel members are drawn from many disciplines, with dependence on practitioners from state DOTs.

### RESOURCES:

[Information for Panel Members](#)  
[The Roles of NCHRP Panel Members and Liaisons](#)  
[Panel Nominations](#)

## Proposal Process

Project panels analyze the problem statement, develop the final project scope and objectives, and prepare a request for proposals from qualified research agencies. Requests for proposals are posted on TRB's website, TRB E-Newsletter, and a self-subscription listserv. Proposals must comply with the format outlined in the publication "Information and Instructions for Preparing Proposals."

### RESOURCES:

[Information for Proposers](#)  
[Information and Instructions for Preparing Proposals Requests for Proposals](#)

## Research Contractor Selection

Project panels select research contractors after evaluation of all proposals and discussion of proposers' past performance on other research projects administered by NCHRP or others.

Selection of a contractor is made by the responsible project panel considering the following factors:

- The proposer's demonstrated understanding of the problem;
- The merit of the proposed research approach and methodology;
- Experience, qualifications, and objectivity of the research team in the same or closely related problem area;
- The plan for ensuring application of results;
- The proposer's Diversity and Inclusion Plan; and
- The adequacy of facilities and equipment.

## Research Phase Begins

Once research starts, NCHRP oversees progress, which includes reviewing monthly progress schedules and quarterly progress reports and maintaining frequent contact with the research contractors. NCHRP also monitors the conduct of the research to ensure consistency with the approved research plan and consults with project panels for technical feedback on the contractor's work.

### RESOURCES:

[Information for Contractors](#)  
[Procedural Manual for Contractors Conducting Research](#)

A YEAR OF  
**NCHRP**

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