



SPUR Meeting Notes: Member Share-out and Passenger Engagement

October 2024

Meeting Summary

This was SPUR's first hybrid meeting which took place in Chicago, IL. Each member presented on current or planned trespassing and suicide prevention efforts at their railroad and asked questions of fellow SPUR members. Passenger engagement was the chosen topic which requested any input about how railroads are improving safety through direct engagement with their passengers.

Key Takeaways

- Broad Agency Announcement (BAA)
 - Research topics up to \$500k can be funded through FRA's Research, Data, and Innovation (RDI) office.
 - Applicants can also make an unsolicited proposal that can be submitted at any time and does not need to meet BAA deadlines. Email [Shala Blue](#) or [Francesco Bedini](#).
 - Projects that may qualify are those in the development phase, those that evaluate safety impacts and show safety value. Anything that can help prevent injury, accident or intentional acts will be considered.
- Updates from members on passenger engagement and improving safety:
 - Adding social workers to the rail police department provides a unique perspective and enhances the railroad's ability to connect unhoused individuals and others on railroad property to the support and services they need.
 - Introducing bystander awareness materials and distributing them at stations. This includes information on how to recognize signs and symptoms of someone in crisis and what to do.
 - Bringing in suicide prevention organizations to train employees on suicide awareness and approaching someone in crisis for example, using [Question, Persuade, Refer \(QPR\)](#) or [Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training \(ASIST\)](#) that can be tailored to the rail environment.
 - Placing floormats with 988 information at the entrances of stairways, escalators, and elevators in certain stations.
 - Creating a temporary interactive workshop at stations where individuals can write messages of hope and encouragement to be posted around the stations.
 - Partnering with mental health organizations to implement suicide prevention messaging around stations.
 - Engaging with colleges, high schools, and middle schools in the surrounding area to distribute messages about railroad safety.