

Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Subapplication Project Tips

Tips for submitting mitigation projects through the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program. The information below includes an overview of eligibility and completeness, project scoring prioritization, and technical feasibility and cost-effectiveness.

Eligibility and Completeness

All BRIC subapplications must meet FEMA's basic eligibility and completeness standards which are documented in the BRIC Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and FEMA's [Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program and Policy Guidance](#).

FEMA cannot consider or fund a subapplication that is ineligible or incomplete. To confirm eligibility and completeness, subapplicants should ensure that all necessary documentation is attached to the subapplication and uses a clear naming convention. In addition to a clear naming convention for attachments, ensure they are uploaded into the correct location within [FEMA Grants Outcomes \(FEMA GO\)](#).

In addition to ensuring the eligibility of each proposed activity and the subapplicant and applicant, there are other critical eligibility requirements, such as:

- Providing a clear and complete scope of work
- Providing a detailed budget that includes specific line-items (no lump sum budgets)
- Demonstrating the project is cost-effective using the BCA Toolkit or another approved methodology
- If required, documenting coverage under a FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan

As noted in the BRIC funding opportunity, subapplicants are exempt from the hazard mitigation planning requirements for the following Capability and Capacity Building activity types:

1. Hazard mitigation planning and planning-related activities
2. Partnerships
3. Building codes
4. Project scoping



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This exemption includes federally recognized tribal governments that submit as subapplicants to a state or territory.

Prioritizing Subapplications

The BRIC funding opportunity includes information on the point scoring and criteria used to rank BRIC subapplications. The criteria help prioritize projects that meet other programmatic goals. For example, these projects could encourage resilience through building codes and nature-based solutions.

To increase the competitiveness of your projects submitted under the National Competition, provide detailed descriptions and relevant documentation to demonstrate how your project is meeting both the qualitative evaluation criteria and technical evaluation criteria (more information on these criteria can be found on the [Program Support Materials Resource webpage](#)).

In addition, applicants are encouraged to consider the following:

- Is the project in a disadvantaged community?
- Is the project from a federally recognized tribe or in a Community Disaster Resilience Zone?
- How many people will benefit from this project?
- How much risk reduction is being proposed?
- Does the community have higher-level building codes?
- Does the state get points for Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS)?
- Does the project consider nature-based solutions?
- Does the project factor in future conditions and climate change?
- Is there consideration of using partnerships and engaging in outreach?
- Was the project developed under BRIC Direct Technical Assistance?
- Is this a large infrastructure project?

The BRIC program prioritizes activities that benefits disadvantaged communities. This supports the program's guiding principle of promoting equity and carrying out the [Justice40 Initiative](#). The program also focuses on aid that benefits communities in census tracts that meet the thresholds for at least one of the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool's categories or are on lands within the boundaries of federally recognized tribes. Applicants and subapplicants should define their disadvantaged communities as outlined in the BRIC Qualitative Evaluation Criteria Program Support Material.

Submit a map associated with a geospatial file to show the estimated area that will benefit from the project as outlined in the Technical Evaluation Criteria Program Support Material. You can find this, and other BRIC resources, on the [Program Support Materials Resources](#) webpage. This step will help you show if a project benefits a Justice40 community, [Community Disaster Resilience Zone \(CDRZ\)](#), or Economically Disadvantaged Rural Community.

Communities that do not receive points for building codes and BCEGS should identify ways to make up for those.

Technical Feasibility and Cost-Effectiveness

To be considered for funding, applicants and subapplicants must show that the project is cost-effective and technically feasible. This means it is designed to increase resilience, reduce injuries and loss of life, and/or reduce damage to property, critical services, facilities and/or infrastructure from natural hazards.

To confirm technical feasibility, show how the project will be executed and explain how it will mitigate existing risks to people and property. Consider the following in the application:

- Explain how the project will reduce risk from natural hazards
- Include the line-item budget in FEMA GO application
- Provide any technical documents that could explain the project better and more completely
- Show cost-effectiveness through the BCA Toolkit or in a streamlined approach
- Confirm all the BCA documentation was uploaded to FEMA GO

FEMA routinely receives applications that are unable to demonstrate technical feasibility and/or cost-effectiveness and recommends avoiding the following mistakes, which can result in ineligibility:

- **Incomplete scope of work, or a scope of work that conflicts with industry standards.** Final design does not need to be complete, but the scope of work should be clear and consistent to prove the project is feasible and reduces risk to natural hazards.
- **Conflicting before and after mitigation damage.** The existing risk and the residual risk should be identified.
- **Insufficient documentation.** Documentation can include stamped and sealed reports, design documents, technical drawings, surveys and studies, project site maps, historical data, etc.
- **Inconsistencies across the application.** Information about proposed design and the level of protection should be clear and consistent. Project costs should also be consistent with the project design.

Most projects use [FEMA's Benefit-Cost Analysis \(BCA\) Toolkit](#) to prove cost-effectiveness. This is not the case if the project qualifies for a streamlined cost-effectiveness methodology, such as pre-calculated benefits or BCA support. Avoid the following, which can result in ineligibility:

- **Lack of documentation for the basis of estimating damage.** Consider the benefitting area of the project and document the existing buildings and infrastructure present within that area boundary. Descriptions of the building(s), infrastructure, capacity and/or population served, may be appropriate depending on the project type.
- **Undocumented Recurrence Intervals (RI).** This describes the odds of a disaster event of a certain magnitude occurring and should increase with event severity. Documentation should show the source of the RIs. If the RIs are unknown, use the unknown frequency calculator in the BCA Toolkit for three or more historic events.
- **Unsupported BCA inputs.** Support each value entered in the BCA Toolkit with an explanation and documentation unless it is a FEMA standard or default value.

Consider the project scoping activity type if it is difficult to get technical or cost-effectiveness documentation for the project. The [Program Support Material Resources](#) webpage has additional information.

Additional Information and Resources

- [BCA Helpline](mailto:BCHelpline@fema.dhs.gov): BCHelpline@fema.dhs.gov or call toll free at 855-540-6744.
- [BRIC Notice of Funding Opportunity](#): Grants.gov or on the www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/learn/notice-funding-opportunities
- [FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance](http://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation): www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation
- [State Hazard Mitigation Officers](http://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/state-local-territorial-governments/state-contacts): www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/state-local-territorial-governments/state-contacts
- Justice40 Initiative resources:
 - [Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative](http://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads-2021/07/M-21-28.pdf): www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads-2021/07/M-21-28.pdf
 - [Addendum to the Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative](http://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/M-23-09_Signed_CEQ_CPO.pdf): www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/M-23-09_Signed_CEQ_CPO.pdf
 - [Executive Order 14008: Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad Section 223](http://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/02/01/2021-02177/tackling-the-climate-crisis-at-home-and-abroad): www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/02/01/2021-02177/tackling-the-climate-crisis-at-home-and-abroad
- [FEMA Region Offices](http://www.fema.gov/about/organization/regions): www.fema.gov/about/organization/regions
- [Regional Tribal Liaisons](http://www.fema.gov/about/organization/tribal-affairs): www.fema.gov/about/organization/tribal-affairs