



# 2024 Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grant Round: Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities (BRIC)

Washington State Military Department

Emergency Management Division

Camp Murray, WA 98430

## Announcement and Guidance: FEMA's 2024 BRIC Grant Round

The purpose of this announcement is to share key information regarding the forthcoming release of FEMA's Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the FY2024 BRIC grant round, and to provide guidance to potential BRIC sub-applicants about Washington Emergency Management Division's (EMD) required grant application process.

### FY2024 BRIC Grant Application Timeline

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will announce the opening of their application period for the FY2024 Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant program later this year. EMD is designated to administer and oversee these programs for the State, including the application process for all eligible entities with the State (Federally recognized Tribes may apply directly to FEMA or through WA EMD).

EMD has established a two-step process for BRIC sub-applicants that starts with a pre-application followed by a full application. EMD's process and timeline is designed to ensure we meet FEMA's anticipated late-February 2025 deadline for the State, as *applicant*, to submit its complete package of *sub-applications*. All entities seeking grant consideration must follow the State's submission process and deadlines, which are described below.

### STEP ONE: Pre-application and Eligibility Review

- **No later than Friday, September 27, 2024:** EMD's Mitigation Section will accept pre-application forms, which are available on its [website](#) and submitted to EMD via email to [hma@mil.wa.gov](mailto:hma@mil.wa.gov). EMD will review the pre-applications for eligibility and contact potential sub-applicants to discuss their proposals.
- EMD will invite eligible sub-applicants to submit full sub-applications in FEMA GO **only after** their pre-application has been submitted and EMD has contacted them to discuss the proposal's eligibility. **Sub-applicants who do not submit a pre-application form by September 27, 2024, will not be eligible to submit full applications.**
- Once invited to submit a full sub-application, jurisdictions are encouraged to submit early to receive technical assistance from EMD.

### STEP TWO (by invitation only): Development and Submission of a full FEMA GO Sub-Application

- For sub-applicants who complete step one (pre-application) and who are invited to submit full applications, **the deadline to submit a complete FEMA GO sub-application for BRIC for EMD review will be Friday, December 13, 2024.** Sub-applications submitted after this date will not be reviewed or submitted to FEMA for consideration.
- **Please note, no sub-applications can be initiated and/or developed in FEMA GO until after FEMA releases its FY24 NOFO. The system requires that all sub-applications be associated with WA State's FY24 application, which FEMA only makes accessible after release of their NOFO.**
- EMD will review sub-applications for eligibility, completeness and cost effectiveness. We will request additional information if required and will work with sub-applicants to make selected applications as competitive and complete as possible. Sub-applications deemed mostly or substantially incomplete and/or lacking key required information may be omitted from further consideration.

- WA State EMD will complete its sub-application review and selection process and will submit its final state application package to FEMA for the FY2024 BRIC program no later than **Friday, February 21, 2025** per FEMA's anticipated State submission deadline.

FEMA announced its selections for FY2023 BRIC grants this summer. WA EMD is in the process of reviewing national technical and qualitative criteria scoring summaries across all FY2023 sub-applications that were not selected for further review. Note that all WA State sub-applications submitted for FY2023 BRIC were determined to have met HMA program requirements but were not selected against a highly competitive national pool. We will work with those interested in revising and resubmitting under FY2024 as requested.

On a case-by-case basis EMD may provide limited technical assistance for sub-application development on the Scope of Work, Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA), Project Budget, and other sections if requested. EMD will also include several application tools in full application packages to assist local jurisdictions in the preparation and development of quality sub-applications.

### **FY2024 Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)**

The BRIC program makes federal funds available to states, U.S territories, tribes, and local communities for pre-disaster mitigation activities. It is a cost-shared grant, 75 percent federal funds, 12.5 percent state funds and 12.5 percent local (non-federal) matching funds, which is distributed through the reimbursement of eligible expenses over a 3-year period of performance. Detailed program information is available at <https://www.fema.gov/bric>.

Eligible Sub-Applicants: Local governments, including cities, townships, counties, special district governments, and tribes (including federally recognized tribes who choose to apply as sub-applicants) are eligible for grant consideration. All sub-applicants must have a FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan by the grant application deadline and at the time of award, in accordance with Title 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 201.

Funding: **All statements regarding potentially available funds are estimates inferred from last year's nationally available funding for FEMA's 2023 BRIC grant round of \$1 billion.** FEMA will establish specific state allocations and tribal set-asides to include Building Codes Plus Up, as described in their NOFO. This is anticipated to leave about \$700 million available for the national project competition. The maximum federal share available to any single project sub-application is typically around \$50,000,000.

BRIC funds are competitively available for eligible mitigation activities that fall into these main categories:

1. **Capability and Capacity-Building (C&CB):** activities which enhance the knowledge, skills, expertise, etc., of the current workforce to expand or improve the administration of mitigation assistance. This includes activities in the following sub-categories: building codes activities, partnerships, project scoping (previously known as advance assistance), mitigation planning and planning-related activities (e.g., writing or updating hazard mitigation plans), and other activities. We anticipate that states may submit up to \$2,000,000 (federal share) of eligible C&CB sub-applications.
2. **Building Codes Plus Up:** we anticipate states may submit up to \$2,000,000 (federal share) of eligible building code adoption and enforcement activity sub-applications.
3. **Mitigation Projects:** cost-effective projects designed to increase resilience and public safety, reduce injuries and loss of life, and reduce damage and destruction to property, critical services, facilities, and infrastructure. The maximum federal share available to any single project sub-application is typically around \$50,000,000.

The following funding details apply to all sub-applications, regardless of category:

- up to 10 percent of any single sub-application can be used for information dissemination activities, including public awareness and education (brochures, workshops, videos, etc.) related to a proposed C&CB activity or mitigation project.
- up to 5 percent of any single sub-application can be used for eligible and reasonable indirect costs, direct administrative costs, and other administrative expenses associated with the specific mitigation measure or project. Unlike all other sub-application budget categories, these *Management Costs* funds are not subject to the local cost share requirement; they are 100% federal and do not require local matching funds.

For general, programmatic guidance on mitigation grant eligibility categories and requirements, see the 2023 Hazard Mitigation Assistance Guide (<https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/hazard-mitigation-assistance-guidance>).

**FEMA Priorities and Evaluation Criteria per NOFO:**

*For FY 2024, the priorities for the program are anticipated to incentivize natural hazard risk reduction activities that mitigate risk to public infrastructure and disadvantaged communities as referenced in EO 14008; incorporate nature-based solutions including those designed to reduce carbon emissions; enhance climate resilience and adaptation; and increase funding to applicants that facilitate the adoption and enforcement of the latest published editions of building codes. BRIC encourages hazard mitigation projects that meet multiple program priorities.*

FEMA’s FY2024 NOFO will provide their specific evaluation criteria, which will include a Technical Evaluation Criteria table and a Qualitative Evaluation Criteria Table. The scores resulting from FEMA’s application of these criteria will be used to determine the competitive outcomes for all sub-applications that pass their initial Eligibility and Completeness reviews.

Washington State EMD will further assess and prioritize its own project sub-applications based on the qualitative criteria described in Table 1 below.

*Table 1. Sample WA EMD Project Evaluation Criteria and scoring scale for BRIC*

<b>Mitigation Project Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
The proposed project anticipates impacts on disadvantaged communities (e.g., socially vulnerable populations), especially regarding the <a href="#">Justice40 Initiative</a> , equitable risk-reduction outcomes and whole-community approaches to disaster resilience.					
The proposed project addresses community lifelines and critical infrastructure vulnerability.					
The proposed project has multiple benefits beyond hazard risk reduction, including climate change resilience, sustainable development, and environmental restoration.					
The proposed project is collaborative and promotes shared responsibility, partnerships, and is supported by multiple jurisdictions or agencies.					
The proposed project has a clear and direct link to a local, FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plan.					
<b>Total Score</b>					

In addition, EMD encourages mitigation proposals for the following project types and methods (all project applications must meet FEMA's BCA criteria and other programmatic criteria):

Critical Infrastructure and Facilities: projects that correct or eliminate seismic structural deficiency, severe wildfire vulnerability, or repetitive flooding for community lifeline infrastructure such as water, wastewater, powerlines, roadways, public safety facilities (fire, police, hospitals, 911, etc.), and schools.

Tsunami Inundation: projects within mapped tsunami inundation zones that develop, design and/or construct tsunami vertical evacuation structures or evacuation routes, as well as projects designed to improve evacuation efficiency and access to vertical evacuation structures post-earthquake (e.g., landslide mitigation along evacuation routes).

Extreme Heat: projects that improve community resilience to extreme heat through measures such as proactive planning, green infrastructure and urban design, structural retrofits, and cooling shelters.

Flood Mitigation: projects that address root causes of hydrologic flow problems and expand drainage/storage capacity, such as improving stream/river connectivity with floodplains, reducing channelization, reducing impervious surfaces, and removing hydrologic barriers.

Coastal Erosion: projects that address root causes of coastal erosion, incorporate green infrastructure methods to reduce or eliminate vulnerability to erosive events, and inhibit development in high-risk coastal areas (especially V Zones).

### **Additional Sub-Application Information**

- State contributions to the non-federal cost share requirements are subject to Legislature approval and cannot be guaranteed at the time of this Announcement.
- To be eligible for grant award, sub-applicants must have a FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plan by the sub-application deadline AND when funds are awarded. If a plan is still under FEMA review on February 21, 2025, then EMD will coordinate with FEMA regarding the approval timeline.
- Private non-profit organizations are not eligible to directly apply for assistance from the BRIC program. Another eligible applicant (e.g., local government or state agency) can, however, act as Applicant Agent and apply on the organization's behalf. The Applicant Agent is responsible for meeting award terms and conditions.
- All sub-applications for BRIC must be made to the State through FEMA's online FEMA GO system. FEMA GO access information will be provided to sub-applicants when they are invited to apply.
- Sub-applicants may be reimbursed for eligible **pre-award costs** incurred prior to the date of grant award for non-construction activities directly related to developing the project proposal. Activities may include, but are not limited to, development of the application, benefit-cost analysis, environmental/historic preservation data, project documentation, and design/engineering. These costs can only be reimbursed after award with proper documentation, and in accordance with the approved cost share terms, if they are included in the proposed budget.
- Except for the above-noted pre-award costs, BRIC grant funds are only available for work performed after FEMA issues an award. For this reason, BRIC grants are suitable for projects with extended implementation schedules rather than short-term, time-sensitive projects. WA EMD staff will review timelines with potential sub-applicants and discuss these considerations during pre-application reviews.

- A sub-application cannot be submitted for both FMA and BRIC programs. If a proposal is eligible for FMA then it will not be considered for BRIC.
- All project sub-applications must determine cost effectiveness using [FEMA's benefit-cost analysis \(BCA\) software](#), Version 6.0, except for proposals covered under the Pre-calculated Benefits waiver and Community & Capacity-Building proposals. The BCA software is available for free on the linked FEMA site. WA EMD staff cannot provide technical assistance for BCA software download issues, so please contact the [BCA helpline](#) with any issues.
- For projects with a total cost of less than \$1,000,000, the sub-applicant may provide a narrative that includes qualitative and quantitative data demonstrating the benefits and cost-effectiveness of the project. Total project costs include all project costs, not just the federal share. Instructions for completing a cost-effectiveness narrative may be found at <https://www.fema.gov/grants/tools/benefit-cost-analysis>.
- The FY2024 BRIC grant round is nationally competitive, and WA EMD cannot guarantee grant awards to any sub-applicant.