



FEMA Mitigation funding opportunity:

Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Program 2023

FEMA has announced the 2023 nationally competitive BRIC grant program. BRIC offers a funding opportunity for large-scale, high-impact mitigation projects and state non-competitive allocation funding for capability and capacity-building activities, mitigation planning, and mitigation projects. The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) requests that potential applicants submit Notices of Interest (NOIs) for consideration and selection before October 27, 2023.

| Nebraska Allocation | National Competition for Mitigation Projects |
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| \$2,000,000 | \$701,000,000 |
| <p>Capability & Capacity Building Activities, *including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building codes activities; • Partnerships; • Project scoping;** • Mitigation planning; • Planning Related Activities; and • Eligible mitigation projects | <p>Competitive mitigation projects must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be cost-effective • Increase resilience and public safety; • Reduce injuries and loss of life; and • Reduce damage and destruction to property, critical services, facilities, and infrastructure |
| <p>*C&CB activities must result in a resource, strategy, or tangible mitigation product. ** Scoping projects should result in a mitigation project application to submit under future mitigation funding opportunities.</p> | <p>And must be aligned with the eligibility and evaluation criteria outlined in the BRIC Funding Announcement (NOFO FY 2023):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Evaluation Criteria and • Qualitative Evaluation Criteria |

NEBRASKA ALLOCATION

First, the State of Nebraska will prioritize **Capability & Capacity Building Activities (C&CB), including Local Hazard Mitigation Plans (LHMPs)**. The state will select C&CB activities that enhance mitigation strategies and produce tangible mitigation products that reduce or eliminate risk and damage from future natural hazards, increase resiliency, and promote a culture of preparedness. The specific types of activities are listed above.

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NEBRASKA LOCAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLANS

NEMA will prioritize planning applications from districts with LHMPs expiring in 2026, these areas should obtain funding no later than 2025.

SCOPING PROJECTS

If your community is impacted by a hazard, and you are unsure what action(s) to take to mitigation that hazard's impact, a scoping project may be right for you. These projects provide funds for studies, engineering, and design work to pursue mitigation action(s). In addition, scoping projects should result in a mitigation project application to submit under future mitigation funding opportunities. FEMA will prioritize these projects for future funding.

MITIGATION PROJECTS

Given the federal share available under the state allocation, NEMA plans to prioritize at least one mitigation project for submission with the C&CB activities. In addition, NEMA will identify projects that will fit under the state allocation once they have prioritized C&CB activities.

NATIONAL COMPETITION FOR MITIGATION PROJECTS

Proposed BRIC projects cannot exceed the \$50 million federal share, and a minimum 25 percent local/non-federal match is required for this grant. The FEMA Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) outlines evaluation criteria for BRIC projects: **technical criteria (all or nothing scoring)** and **qualitative criteria (graded scoring)**. Each application **must** explain how the project meets **each of the scoring criteria** to be competitive nationally. Refer to the tables below for a breakdown (FEMA BRIC NOFO, p. 14).

NEMA will prioritize projects submitted under previous Hazard Mitigation Assistance grants, including previous BRIC and previous major disaster declarations. In reviewing NOIs, NEMA and its partners will check potential projects against both the technical and qualitative criteria enumerated here.

FEMA may phase a project if providing the complete technical information required for a full eligibility or EHP review of a complex project is beyond a subapplicant's technical and financial resources. NEMA and FEMA may provide technical assistance to the subapplicant to develop this complete body of technical data by approving a subapplication to complete a Phase I design, engineering, and EHP (FEMA BRIC NOFO, p. 73).

| Technical Evaluation Criteria for National Competition | |
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| Criteria | Potential Total Points |
| Infrastructure project ²¹ | 15 |
| Incorporation of nature-based solutions for hazard mitigation. ²² | |
| Subapplication includes a neighborhood or site scale nature-based solution(s) | 5 |
| OR | OR |
| Subapplication includes watershed or landscape scale nature-based solution(s) including those that support coastal resilience | 15 |

| Sub-criterion 3.1 – Building Code Adoption and Enforcement | |
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| <p>a. Building Code Adoption</p> <p>i. The subapplication will receive 5 points if the community where the project will be developed has locally adopted building codes based on both the International Building Code (IBC) and the International Residential Code (IRC) model codes published by the International Code Council (ICC). To obtain these points, both codes have to be 2018 or 2021. [5 points]</p> <p>ii. The subapplication will receive an additional 5 points if the locally adopted building codes by the community are based on the applicant’s mandatory state-, tribal-, territory-wide adoption of building codes based on both the International Building Code (IBC) and the International Residential Code (IRC) model codes published by the International Code Council (ICC). To obtain these points, both codes have to be 2018 or 2021. [5 points]</p> | <p>5</p> <p>AND</p> <p>5</p> <p>AND</p> |
| <p>b. Building Code Enforcement – Subapplicant has Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS) Rating of 1 to 5. [10 points]</p> | <p>10</p> <p>OR</p> |
| <p>Sub-criterion 3.2 - Alternative Higher Standards</p> <p>Any subapplicant that has not received points under Sub-criterion 3.1 could receive 5 points by providing a narrative demonstrating that they hold higher standards for the primary hazard they have identified in their subapplication.</p> <p>Below is a non-exhaustive list of examples for higher standards that could be considered under this sub-criterion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibition of fill within floodway and/or floodplain • Requiring at least 2 foot of freeboard in all Special Flood Hazard Areas • Prohibition of siting/placement of critical facilities within the 0.2-percent-annual-chance-floodplain (aka 500-year floodplain) • Coastal Zone (V Zone) development requirements, including open foundations, seaward of identified Limits of Moderate Wave Action (LiMWA) • Utilizing a higher risk category as defined in the International Code Council’s International Building Code • Utilizing a higher importance factor for the primary hazard as defined in the American Society of Civil Engineers’ Minimum Design Loads and Associated Criteria for Buildings and Other Structures (ASCE 7) | <p>5</p> |
| <p>Application generated from a previous FEMA HMA Project Scoping award or any other federal grant award, or the subapplicant is a past recipient of BRIC DTA</p> | <p>10</p> |
| <p>Application covers a project that is located in or primarily benefits:</p> <p>A Justice40 community or communities, including any geographically defined community or communities identified by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST).</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Designation as an Economically Disadvantaged Rural Community (as defined in 42 U.S.C. § 5133(a) as a small impoverished community) or a federally recognized Tribal government, or a subapplication that benefits or primarily benefits a Community Disaster Resilience Zone (as defined in 42 U.S.C. § 5136(a)(1)).</p> | <p>30</p> <p>OR</p> <p>40</p> |
| <p>Note: A subapplication receives the maximum of 40 points if it is identified by both Justice40 and Community Disaster Resilience Zone.</p> | |

Qualitative Evaluation Criteria for the National Competition

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| 1 | Risk Reduction/Resilience Effectiveness | <p>The subapplication details how the project will effectively reduce risk and increase resilience within the community based on their primary natural hazard risk (including the benefits quantified in the BCA), realize ancillary benefits, and leverage innovation. Ancillary benefits could include how this project will reduce carbon emissions (for example incorporating low-carbon materials into project design as described in the IRA implementation memorandum²⁴), address inequities and provide the greatest support to those with greatest need, enable greater community resilience through cybersecurity in accordance with best practices and standards, yield workforce and economic benefits, etc. Additionally, ancillary benefits could include how this project supports mission areas of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), community-based groups, and other partners. Leverages innovation could refer to leveraging collaborations and resources with NGOs, community-based groups, and other partners.</p> | 30 |
| 2 | Climate Change and Other Future Conditions | <p>FEMA works with state, local, Tribal, and territorial governments to build and deliver resources and capabilities that ensure the nation can withstand climate hazards of today and those we anticipate for tomorrow. Applicants and subapplicants should use evidence-based, best-available climate data sets, information resources, and decision-support tools, including Federal resources, to identify current and future climate risks over the project's expected service life.</p> <p>Climate projections, emission scenarios, or other suitable scenario conditions should be specified based on the projects service life and applicants risk tolerance, as appropriate and available. Applicants should document how their planned project design and operations are resilient to any identified current and future climate risks.</p> <p>Subapplications should describe how the project will enhance climate adaptation and resilience using the best available data, detail how the project is being responsive to the effects of climate change (such as sea level rise, increased rainfall, increased likelihood of flash flood due to wildfire, etc.) and/or other future conditions (population/demographic/land use, etc.), and cites data sources, assumptions, and models.</p> | 20 |
| 3 | Implementation Measures | <p>The subapplication adequately describes how the costs and schedule will be managed, how the project will be successfully implemented, and how innovative techniques to</p> | 15 |

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| | | facilitate implementation will be incorporated. The project’s scope of work identifies sufficient technical and managerial staff and resources to successfully implement this project. The subapplication should describe whether and how the project will incorporate strong labor standards to ensure high-quality work, avert disruptive and costly delays, and promote efficiency. For example, strong labor standards include use of project labor agreements (PLAs), requiring workers to be paid wages at or above the prevailing rate, use of local hire provisions, using a directly employed workforce (as opposed to a subcontracted workforce), use of an appropriately skilled workforce, e.g., through Registered Apprenticeships or other joint labor-management training programs that serve all workers, particularly those underrepresented or historically excluded); and use of an appropriately credentialed workforce (i.e., satisfying requirements for appropriate and relevant pre-existing occupational training, certification, and licensure). | |
| 4 | Population Impacted | The project subapplication demonstrates community-wide benefits and identifies the proportion of the population that will be impacted, including a description of the disadvantaged communities as referenced in EO 14008 and identified in CEJEST. The subapplication also describes how the project was selected and designed to maximize positive impacts and minimize negative impacts to any disadvantaged populations. The subapplication demonstrates how disadvantaged communities as referenced in EO 14008 are benefited. | 25 |
| 5 | Community Engagement and Other Outreach Activities | The subapplication describes outreach strategy and supporting activities appropriate to the project and the community that advance mitigation. The subapplication also outlines the types of community planning processes leveraged and describes how input from a diverse range of stakeholders, including overburdened and underserved communities, was gathered and incorporated into project conception and design. Further, the subapplication outlines how such community planning and stakeholder input will continue to be used to help direct project execution. | 5 |
| 6 | Leveraging Partners | The project subapplication incorporates partnerships (e.g., state, Tribal, private, local community, etc.) that will ensure the project meets community needs, including those of overburdened and underserved populations, and show the outcome of those partnerships (e.g., leveraging resources such as financial, material, and educational resources, coordinating multi-jurisdictional projects, heightened focus on equity related issues, etc.) | 5 |

BRIC DIRECT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (BRIC DTA)

FEMA has implemented an initiative, BRIC Direct Technical Assistance (BRIC DTA), to support the development of climate resilience planning and project design in, and with, underserved and/or disadvantaged communities, and federally recognized tribal governments that are disproportionately affected by natural hazard risk and climate change. Eligible recipients of non-financial direct technical assistance provided through BRIC DTA are federally recognized tribal governments and any local government entities, as defined in Section 102(8) of the Stafford Act (42 § U.S.C. 5122(8)), including, but not limited to, tribal governments, cities, towns/townships, parishes, boroughs, counties, special district governments, metropolitan or regional planning organizations, and other political subdivisions of a state. Federally recognized tribal governments and local governments interested in receiving technical assistance can find more information at <https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/building-resilient-infrastructure-communities/directtechnical-assistance>.

NEXT STEPS

Along with this State NOFO, NEMA has an NOI form for project proposals. **The deadline to submit an NOI to the NEMA Hazard Mitigation Unit is October 27, 2023.**

NEMA will be hosting **one virtual applicant briefings** in October, this briefing will be recorded and posted to the NEMA Hazard Mitigation webpage. The links to the virtual briefing with the date and time is at the end of this notice. If your agency or local community is interested in learning more about the BRIC program and next steps, please attend one of these briefings. NEMA will review program requirements, eligibility, and competitive considerations. The Governor’s Task Force for Disaster Recovery will review all NOIs and prioritize the most competitive projects for submission.

STATE & FEDERAL KEY DATES

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| 1. Completed NOIs submitted to NEMA Hazard Mitigation Unit | October 27, 2023 |
| 2. GTFDR selection of projects to move forward with formal FEMA application | November 1, 2023 |
| 3. FEMA Application Start Date | October 16, 2023 |
| 4. NOI late submission cutoff* | October 31, 2023 |
| 5. State application submission deadline (complete applications submitted to NEMA Hazard Mitigation Unit for review) | February 2, 2024 |
| 6. Initial registration in SAM.gov includes UEI issuance | Four weeks before actual submission deadline |
| 7. Obtaining a valid Employer Identification Number (EIN) | Four weeks before actual submission deadline |
| 8. Creating an account with login.gov | Four weeks before actual submission deadline |
| 9. Registering in SAM or updating SAM registration | Four weeks before actual submission deadline |
| 10. Registering in FEMA Go | Four weeks before actual submission deadline |
| 11. Submitting Final application in FEMA Go | February 29, 2024 |

The dates and times for the Nebraska applicant briefings are as follows:

1. BRIC & FMA NOFO Webinar #1

Thursday, October 19, 2023

1:00 PM | (UTC-05:00) Central Time (US & Canada) | 1 hr

<https://sonvideo.webex.com/sonvideo/j.php?MTID=mb9d12aa7c00eedd8ee058df130837db8>

Meeting number (access code): 2491 975 2179

Meeting password: MrB5C9csve4

Tap to join from a mobile device (attendees only)

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