

BRIC Project Scoping Activities

This program support material provides information about project scoping activities eligible under the State/Territory Allocation and Tribal Set-Aside of the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program. As outlined in Section A.9 (*Program Description – Program Overview, Objectives, and Priorities*) of the BRIC Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), FEMA encourages the use of, and provides financial assistance for, project scoping as an eligible capability- and capacity-building (C&CB) activity.



Background

Project scoping activities are designed to develop mitigation strategies and obtain data to prioritize, select, and develop complete applications in a timely manner that result in either an improvement in the capability to identify appropriate mitigation projects or in the development of an application-ready mitigation project for BRIC or another funding opportunity.¹

Project scoping is the successor to Advance Assistance previously used in other Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) programs, such as the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) grant program, and the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) grant program. This change was made to align the name of the activity with the purpose of this project type. As detailed below, activities previously eligible under Advance Assistance will remain eligible for project scoping under BRIC.

¹ This definition is derived from the Advance Assistance description on page 22 of the *Hazard Mitigation Assistance Guidance* (HMA Guidance; 2015), which is available at <https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/hazard-mitigation-assistance-guidance-and-addendum-fy15>.



The BRIC NOFO outlines how Applicants can apply for funding to support project scoping activities; these subapplications need to be ranked along with the other allocation activities submitted by the Applicant. Project scoping activities are not eligible for funding under the national competition.

Project scoping is included as a BRIC-eligible activity based on feedback received during the engagement process that occurred in the summer of 2019. During this process, stakeholders routinely identified both the benefits and difficulties of Advance Assistance (previous term). Many stakeholders view Advance Assistance as an important tool in the development of future mitigation projects—particularly given BRIC’s shift to larger infrastructure projects—and urged FEMA to increase or remove the \$200,000 cap on funding to each Applicant for Advance Assistance activities. In response to that feedback, project scoping activities are not subject to any other funding limitations or caps, so long as they do not exceed the total allocation amount.

For more information on BRIC and stakeholder engagement efforts, please visit <https://www.fema.gov/bric>.

Activity Eligibility Criteria

As described in Section C.3 (*Eligibility Information – Other Eligibility Information*) of the BRIC NOFO:

“C&CB [capability- and capacity-building] activities must result in a resource, strategy, or tangible mitigation product that will reduce or eliminate risk and damage from future natural hazards, increase resiliency, and promote a culture of preparedness.”

Applicants and subapplicants must provide a detailed explanation of the proposed project scoping activity, expected milestones, and planned deliverables to demonstrate the effectiveness and ultimate benefit of the activity. At closeout, Applicants and subapplicants must also provide information and materials to detail the outcomes of the approved activities and deliverables stated in the subapplication.

Eligible Project Scoping Activities

The following list presents potential project scoping activities eligible under BRIC. This list is not exhaustive; Applicants and subapplicants may have needs that extend beyond what has been included here. Additional examples of activities may be found in the HMA Guidance, as noted in the additional resources list below.

- Scoping and developing hazard mitigation projects, including engineering design and feasibility studies
- Conducting meetings, outreach, and coordination with potential subapplicants and community residents to identify potential future mitigation projects
- Evaluating facilities or areas to determine appropriate mitigation actions
- Incorporating environmental planning and historic preservation considerations into project planning activities
- Collecting data for benefit-cost analyses, environmental compliance, and other program requirements
- Conducting hydrologic and hydraulic studies for unmapped flood zones or other areas where communities propose to submit hazard mitigation projects
- Coordinating, scoping, and developing regional or multi-community hazard mitigation projects that require coordination to cohesively address resiliency and sustainability goals
- Utilizing third-party cost estimation services for project budgeting across subapplications

- Contracting services to address data consistency needs for other project application categories, such as environmental planning and historic preservation, cost-sharing mechanisms, and work schedules

Project Scoping Activities in FEMA GO

The new FEMA Grants Outcomes (FEMA GO) management system will be used for the BRIC program and is where Applicants and subapplicants submit, track, and manage all applications. The eGrants system will not be used to process BRIC applications or subapplications. This section provides a brief synopsis on how to submit project scoping activity subapplications in FEMA GO under the annual BRIC State/Territory Allocation or Tribal Set-Aside, including information on selecting the correct activity type and an overview of the required narrative questions. More information on navigating the new FEMA GO system and the full application process can be found at <https://www.fema.gov/grants/guidance-tools/fema-go>.

FEMA GO Information

- To begin a project scoping activity subapplication in FEMA GO, select the **“Project Scoping”** Subapplication Type.
- In the Scope of Work Section, select the Primary Activity Type that best describes your activity.
- Select a **Primary Community Lifeline**; if applicable, select secondary and tertiary lifelines as well.
- Q: *“Will it result in a complete project application for future funding opportunities?”*
 - Project scoping activities are intended to lead to future mitigation projects or project applications (though they may be for grant programs other than BRIC). Describe how your project scoping activity successfully achieves this outcome.
- Q: *“What are you doing to consider other risks in the project area?”*
 - Detail how your project scoping activity accounts for a range of risks within the area. Activities may include ancillary benefits outside of the primary hazard being mitigated. If the proposed subapplication does not cover more than one risk, this information can be provided here.
- In the Cost Effectiveness Section, select **“Not Applicable.”**

Additional Resources

The resources below provide additional information related to the BRIC program to assist Applicants and subapplicants in their development of BRIC subapplications and can be found at <https://www.fema.gov/bric>:

- BRIC Direct Technical Assistance Program Support Material
- BRIC Technical Criteria Program Support Material

Additional information about project scoping can be found at the following links:

- [Hazard Mitigation Assistance Guidance](#)
- [Advance Assistance](#): Description and activities list may be found on page 119 of the HMA Guidance pdf.