

Evaluation Criteria for the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities National Competition for Fiscal Years 2024-25

Eligible subapplications submitted for the Fiscal Years 2024-25 Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities funding opportunity are scored using six evaluation criteria.

This Program Support Material explains what each criterion measures, how points are assigned, and what FEMA reviews in subapplications. It is intended to help applicants develop stronger, more targeted project subapplications by clarifying the evaluation criteria and scoring process.

The application period closes at 3 p.m. on July 23, 2026.

Using This Guide

For applicants and subapplicants

- Use the criteria descriptions and tips as a checklist when drafting the Scope of Work and assembling supporting documentation.
- When submitting your subapplication in FEMA GO, ensure responses are entered in the appropriate sections and are complete and directly address the questions.
- Make sure each criterion is explicitly addressed, so reviewers do not have to guess about the information.

BRIC Hazard Mitigation Projects Reviewing Criteria

Threshold Criteria

FEMA checks eligibility and completeness for all applications and subapplications, including:

- Eligible applicant and subapplicant
- Eligible activities and costs
- Complete Scope of Work and line item budget
- Cost effectiveness (BCA) and technical feasibility for projects
- Eligible, available nonfederal cost share
- Consistency with the relevant Hazard Mitigation Plan (State, Tribal, Local, Multi-Hazard plans)



FEMA

National Competition Evaluation

Project subapplications that meet all threshold criteria will be scored using the Evaluation Criteria for the National Competition. This is a maximum of 100 points.

Final Selection

FEMA considers scores together with funding availability and program priorities (including geographic distribution) when making final selections.

Summary Evaluation Criteria for the National Competition

Criterion	Max Points	What FEMA Looks For
Infrastructure Project Construction Readiness	30	How developed the project design is and how ready it is to move to award and construction without major delay.
New Applicant or Subapplicant	15	Whether the applicant and/or subapplicant has ever been selected in a BRIC National Competition.
Building Code Adoption and Enforcement	20	Adoption and enforcement of current/next most recent hazard resistant consensus-based model building codes, or documented alternative higher standards.
Small Impoverished Community	5	Whether the project serves a jurisdiction that meets the statutory definition of a small impoverished community.
Risk Reduction	20	Strength of the Scope of Work narrative in describing risk, expected risk reduction, resilience over the asset life, and ancillary benefits.
Implementation Measures	10	Strength of the narrative in describing cost and schedule management, monitoring and innovative techniques, and available technical/managerial capacity.
Maximum Total Score	100	

Criterion Details and Applicant Tips

Infrastructure Project Construction Readiness (Max 30 points)

The following items are scored:

Projects earn points based on design completion and construction readiness:

- Conceptual Design – 5 points
 - At least 30% design complete.
 - Basic conceptualization and design (overall concept, major elements, preliminary layout).
- Preliminary Design – 15 points
 - More than 30% design complete.
 - Refined design including major systems, materials, dimensions, and draft specifications.
- Detailed Design – 30 points
 - Approximately 90% design or greater.
 - Detailed drawings and specifications suitable for bidding, permitting, and actual construction.
 - Documentation may include environmental and historic preservation materials and permits, when available.

Applicant Tips for Construction Readiness

- Applicants and subapplicants should address this criterion in the “Scope of Work” section of FEMA GO. Upload any supporting attachments there, clearly labeled, with page number(s) cited.
- FEMA GO specifically requests these following items:
 - “Provide a clear and detailed description of your proposed activity.”
 - “Describe how the project is technically feasible and will be effective in reducing the risk by reducing or eliminating damage to property and/or loss of life in the project area. Include engineering design parameters and references to the following: preliminary schematic or engineering drawings/design.”
- Identify key design documents (plans, specifications, technical reports) signed and stamped by a licensed professional engineer (or other design professional licensed by the state to practice in the discipline being certified by the individual) indicating percent design level.
 - Attach, clearly label, and reference design documents in the subapplication as well.
- Clearly state the design level (percentage) and what that means.
 - Example: “Preliminary design with 60% plans completed.”
- Note the status of permitting and Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation review and attach and reference relevant permits in the subapplication.
 - When available, these documents help demonstrate that the project is construction ready.

New Applicant or Subapplicant (15 points)

The following items are scored:

A project can earn points if:

- It is submitted by a **subapplicant that has never been selected** in the BRIC National Competition; or
- It is submitted by an **applicant** (state, territory, or tribal government) **that has never been selected** in the BRIC National Competition.

Tips for New Applicants or Subapplicants

- FEMA will confirm an applicant's and subapplicant's prior BRIC National Competition selection history.
- If you are unaware of your prior BRIC National Competition selection history, please refer to OpenFEMA at <https://www.fema.gov/openfema-data-page/hma-subapplications-v2>.

Building Code Adoption and Enforcement (Max 20 points)

The following items are scored:

Projects earn points under either Subcriteria 3.1 or Subcriteria 3.2.

Subcriteria 3.1 – Model Code Adoption and Enforcement (up to 20 points)

- **Building Code Adoption (5 points):**
The community where the project will be developed has locally adopted the current or next most recent hazard resistant consensus-based model building codes, such as, both the International Building Code (IBC) and International Residential Code (IRC) (2021 or 2024 editions) or equivalent.
- **Locally Adopted Building Codes Based on Mandatory Jurisdiction-Wide Adoption (5 points):**
The locally adopted building codes are based on the applicant's mandatory state, tribal, or territory-wide adoption of these model codes.
- **Building Code Enforcement (10 points):**
The subapplicant has a Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS) rating of 1 to 5.

Subcriteria 3.2 – Alternative Higher Standards (5 points)

- For subapplicants not receiving points under Subcriteria 3.1.
- The subapplication must provide a narrative demonstrating that the jurisdiction maintains higher standards for the primary hazard identified in the project (e.g., flood, wind, seismic), beyond the applicable model codes.

Applicant Tips for Building Code Adoption and Enforcement

- Applicants should include details on their building code adoption status, specifying whether they have adopted current or next most recent hazard-resistant consensus-based model building codes including:
 - International Building Code (IBC), published by the International Code Council (ICC), of current or next most recent edition (2021 or 2024 versions).

- International Residential Code (IRC), published by the International Code Council, of current or next most recent edition (2021 or 2024 versions).
- Applicants or subapplicants should also include their Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule score (or, for Bureau states, a state-verified Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule score at the state level) in the “Evaluation” section of FEMA GO.
- With an application or subapplication, provide the following documentation:
 - Code editions adopted (International Building Code or International Residential Code and others, with year).
 - Basis of adoption (mandatory statewide/territory-wide/tribal requirement versus local only).
 - Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule rating evidence, if applicable.
 - How to Get a Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule Rating:
 - **Local Communities:** Contact your local building inspector or code enforcement office to find out your BCEGS score. If your community does not have a BCEGS score, you can request a BCEGS survey from Insurance Services Office (ISO) online at [ISO Mitigation website](#) or email BCEGS_info@verisk.com. The survey is free and takes 2–4 months. (Note that the application period closes on July 23, so be sure to initiate your request as soon as possible to meet the deadline.)
 - **Bureau States:** If you are in Hawaii, Idaho, Louisiana, Mississippi or Washington, contact your state insurance rating bureau for your state-verified BCEGS score.
 - **State/Territory Subapplicants:** Use the [State Averages published by ISO](#) or submit documentation verified by Insurance Services Office with updated BCEGS scores.
- FEMA GO specifically requests:
 - “Has the applicant adopted building codes consistent with the international codes?”
 - “Have the applicant's building codes been assessed on the Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS)?”
- If using alternative higher standards, clearly explain and attach a copy of the alternative higher standard in the subapplication to show how the specific standard(s):
 - Exceed model code requirements
 - Address the primary hazard in the subapplication

Small Impoverished Community (5 points)

The following items are scored:

Projects earn points if the jurisdiction meets the small impoverished community definition at [Title 42 United States Code Section 5133\(a\)](#) and the [BRIC funding opportunity](#) requirements, including:

- Population of 3,000 or fewer identified by the applicant, and
- Economically disadvantaged, with residents having an average per capita annual income not exceeding 80% of the national per capita income, based on the best available data from the U.S. Census Bureau.
- Jurisdictions meeting the small impoverished community definition are also eligible for up to 90% federal/10% non-federal cost share.

Applicant Tips for Small Impoverished Community

- Ensure the “Community” and “Location” sections in FEMA GO correctly identify the small impoverished community (including Community Information System [CIS] info where applicable).
- An applicant or subapplicant applying on behalf of a small impoverished community must include as part of the subapplication a letter authorizing the submission. There is no required format for the authorizing letter, but it should contain the following information:
 - Point of contact information, including a name, community, address, phone number, and email for the small impoverished community and the applicant or subapplicant applying on their behalf.
 - A signature from an authorized representative of the small impoverished community.
 - Attach documentation supporting the small impoverished status as described in the “Cost Share” section of the funding opportunity.

Risk Reduction (Max 20 points)

The following items are scored:

FEMA scores the Scope of Work narrative based on how well it addresses items 1-3 below. To receive the full 20 points, detailed descriptions must clearly and completely address all the points below. Partial or less complete answers will be graded lower.

1. Effectively reduce hazard risk
 - Identify the hazard(s) (e.g., flood, wildfire, earthquake, drought, extreme weather).
 - Explain what risk (people, property, critical facilities) is being reduced and how the project reduces that risk.
 - FEMA GO requests:
 - “Describe how the project is technically feasible and will be effective in reducing the risk by reducing or eliminating damage to property and/or loss of life in the project area.”
 - “Will the project address the hazards identified and what risks will remain from all hazards after project implementation (residual risk)?”
2. Increase resilience over the asset’s useful life
 - Describe how the project improves the community’s ability to prepare for, withstand, and rapidly recover from the identified hazard(s).
 - Connect, where appropriate, to benefits quantified in the Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA).
 - Explain in detail how asset planning considered natural hazards over the useful life of the asset, including adapting to changing conditions, and how the design addresses those conditions.
3. Realize ancillary benefits
 - Identify additional meaningful benefits related to hazard mitigation (e.g., reduced service interruptions, reduced emergency response costs, improved reliability of critical infrastructure).

Applicant Tips for Risk Reduction

- Applicants and subapplicants should include risk reduction/resiliency effectiveness information in the “Scope of Work” section of FEMA GO.
- Use data where possible (e.g., number of structures protected, estimated damage reduction, population served).

- Data and planning assumptions should consider both current and changing conditions.
- Align the project with relevant State, Tribal or Local Hazard Mitigation Plan priorities.
- Make clear that the primary purpose is hazard risk reduction and clearly distinguish primary risk reduction benefits from other ancillary benefits.

Implementation Measures (Max 10 points)

The following items are scored:

FEMA scores the Implementation Measures narrative based on how well it addresses items 1-4 below. To receive the full 10 points, detailed descriptions must clearly and completely address all the points below. Partial or less complete answers will be graded lower.

- Cost management
 - Processes to manage and control project costs, and how known risks/challenges will be addressed.
- Schedule management
 - A realistic schedule with clear milestones that demonstrates the project is achievable within the allowed period of performance of 36 months.
 - Measures to manage schedule risks and maintain progress, including any Go/No Go milestones for National Competition projects.
- Successful implementation and innovative techniques
 - Pre- and post-implementation monitoring and how progress and performance will be measured.
 - Description of any innovative methods or tools that support effective implementation or risk reduction.
- Technical and managerial capacity
 - Identification of technical/managerial staff and resources that will be used to deliver the project successfully.

Applicant Tips for Implementation Measures

- Applicants and subapplicants should address this criterion in the “Scope of Work” section of FEMA GO and upload any supporting attachments there, clearly labeled, with page number(s) cited.
- FEMA GO requests:
 - “How will the mitigation activity be implemented?”
 - “Who will manage and complete the mitigation activity?”
- Present a concise implementation plan, including:
 - Key roles and any use of qualified contractors
 - Major milestones and realistic timeframes
 - How progress will be tracked and managed
- For National Competition projects, clearly define Go/No Go milestones in the work schedule and describe what will be evaluated for each milestone.