Application Period Open for FEMA Mitigation Grant Programs

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PHILADELPHIA– FEMA recently announced the opening of its FY21 pre-disaster hazard mitigation grant programs, Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) and Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) on September 30, 2021. These grants help fund mitigation actions in states, local communities, tribes and territories to combat climate change and protect underserved communities against disaster hazards.

FEMA's BRIC program has $1 billion allocated, double last year's funding, while FMA has $160 million available for communities across the country this year.

In addition to BRIC and FMA, the White House outlined a historic commitment to climate resiliency by making unprecedented levels of assistance available through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program based on the funding spent during the COVID response. In FEMA Region 3, this means $209 million is available through HMGP. In addition, there is another $65 million of funding yet to be awarded from other disasters. Together, this more than doubles the total amount of funding available to Region 3 communities through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

"The challenges posed by climate change, such as more intense storms, frequent heavy precipitation, heat waves, drought, extreme flooding and higher sea levels could significantly alter the types and magnitudes of hazards faced by communities and the emergency management agencies serving them," said FEMA Region 3 Regional Administrator MaryAnn Tierney. "This is a historic amount of funding available through FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance programs and we encourage communities to work together with their state partners to apply for funding to reduce risk."

Tierney added, "We know that disasters disproportionately impact already vulnerable communities. These grants can help to advance environmental justice, reduce community vulnerability to disasters and promote resilience to climate change."

FEMA changed the scoring criteria for the BRIC grant program this year to expand access to disadvantaged communities. Scoring criteria for the competitive grant program has been adjusted to incentivize mitigation actions that consider climate change and future conditions, populations impacted and economically disadvantaged rural communities. Additionally, FEMA doubled to 20 the number of communities that can receive help with project development through non-financial Direct Technical Assistance.

The FEMA Mitigation Action Portfolio includes examples of innovative mitigation projects that address many types of natural hazards and emphasize the importance of collaboration between governments, private sector entities, and non-governmental organizations in order to achieve effective hazard mitigation and disaster resilience.

FEMA released the BRIC and FMA Notices of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) on Aug. 9, 2021. The NOFOs are posted on grants.gov and provides detailed program information and other grant application and administration requirements. The application period to apply for fiscal year 2021 (FY 2021) will open on Sept. 30, 2021, and close at 3 p.m. Eastern Time on Jan. 28, 2022.

The timeline for HMGP COVID is separate from BRIC and FMA and is dependent on the date of a disaster declaration. Details on HMPG can be found at Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) | FEMA.gov.

Local communities should be mindful of state application deadlines which will be in advance of FEMA's. Communities apply for these grant programs through their states.

The key differences between FEMA's mitigation grant programs:

- Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA)
  - FMA is a pre-disaster, competitive grant program that provides funding to states, local communities, federally recognized tribes and territories.
  - Funds can be used for projects that reduce or eliminate the risk of repetitive flood damage to buildings insured by the National Flood Insurance Program.

- FEMA chooses recipients based on the applicant's ranking of the project and the eligibility and cost-effectiveness of the project.
- FEMA requires state, local, tribal and territorial governments to develop and adopt hazard mitigation plans as a condition for receiving certain types of non-emergency disaster assistance, including funding for hazard mitigation assistance projects.
- Cost share: 75% federal; 25% local. If a project mitigates a repetitive loss property insured by the NFIP, the cost share is 90% federal; 10% local. For severe repetitive loss properties, FEMA will provide up to 100% of the project costs.

- Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)
  - BRIC is a pre-disaster grant program that provides funding to states, local communities, federally recognized tribes, and territories. There are three funding options within BRIC:
    - State/Territory Allocation: provides $1million to each state or territorty for capability & capacity building projects.
    - Tribal Set-Aside: A $25 million pool for projects undertaken by tribal governments across the country.
    - National Competition

  - The BRIC program's guiding principles are: supporting communities through capability- and capacity-building; encouraging and enabling innovation; promoting partnerships; enabling large projects; maintaining flexibility; and providing consistency.
  - Funds diverse mitigation projects with a focus on holistic infrastructure solutions.
  - Cost share: 75% federal; 25% local. If an applicant is an economically disadvantaged rural community, then there is a 90% federal cost share, 10% local.
- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)
  - HMPG is a **post-disaster, non-competitive** grant program that provides funding to states, local communities, federally recognized tribes, and territories.
  - This grant funding is only available after a presidentially declared disaster.
  - Funding is allocated to the state with the disaster declaration. There is not a national competition for the funding, though not all state projects are selected for funding.

- Cost share: 75% federal; 25% local. If an applicant is an economically disadvantaged rural community, then there is a 90% federal cost share, 10% local.

FEMA hosts a series of webinars and information sessions to aid community applicants on hazard mitigation grants: FEMA.gov/blog/hazard-mitigation-funding-now-available

State, local, tribal or territorial officials, as well as community leaders, interested in making the connection between equity and hazard mitigation are encouraged to contact us at FEMA-ExpandingMitigation@fema.dhs.gov.

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FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after disasters.?FEMA Region?3's?jurisdiction includes Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia.

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