Fire Prevention and Safety Grant Program: Fire Prevention and Safety Activity Frequently Asked Questions

This document addresses Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) related to the Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) Grant Program – FP&S Activity. Applicants should refer to the FP&S Grant Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for full details and application requirements.

Table of Contents

What is the purpose of the FP&S Grant Program?

The purpose of the FP&S Grant Program is to award grants directly to fire departments and non-profit organizations for fire prevention programs and supporting firefighter health and safety research and development. The FP&S Grant Program is separated into two activities: Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) and Research and Development (R&D). Using a competitive process that is informed by fire service subject-matter experts, grants in both activities are awarded to applicants whose requests best address the priorities of the FP&S Grant Program.

What changes were made to the FP&S Grant Program since last year?

The FP&S Grant Program NOFO contains information on program updates in the appendix.

How do I apply for an FP&S Program grant?

The online FP&S Grant Program application is available through the FEMA GO (FEMA Grants Outcomes) application portal at FEMA GO application portal. The application will also be linked with the U.S. Fire Administration's website and the Grants.gov website.

What do I need to know about Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation (EHP)?

Recipients and subrecipients proposing projects with the potential to impact the environment or cultural resources must participate in the FEMA EHP review process. Some activities that require EHP review include, but are not limited to:

- Installation of fire/smoke/carbon monoxide alarm systems
- Installation of sprinklers
- Installation of wall mounted lock boxes
- Installation of storage racks/cabinets
- Building renovations such as removal of walls or installation of electrical or water lines
- Training/exercises in natural settings such as rope or swift water
- Installation of LED signs
- Tree trimming or vegetation removal/disturbance
- Any scope of work that involves ground disturbances

The following activities would not require the submission of the FEMA EHP Screening Form:

- Planning and development of policies or processes;

- Management, administrative, or personnel actions;
- Classroom-based training;
- Acquisition of mobile and portable equipment (not involving installation) on or in a building and does not require a storage area to be constructed; and
- Purchase of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Please see FEMA's EHP Screening form and instructions at EHP Screening Form. EHP policy guidance can be found at Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation | FEMA.gov. Recipients will be notified of their EHP responsibilities in the grant award package.

It is FEMA policy that actions initiated and/or completed without fulfilling the specific EHP requirements will not be considered for funding.

Applicants should consider the impact of the EHP process on the proposed period of performance. A project that involves clearing vegetation or trimming trees may take many months to be reviewed by EHP due to required consultation with local groups, such as conservancy, fish and wildlife, and tribes. These applicants may wish to request a 24-month period of performance to ensure that the project can be completed on time.

How can I help FEMA prevent fraud, waste, and abuse?

If you have information about instances of fraud, waste, abuse, or mismanagement involving FEMA programs or operations, you should contact the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General Hotline at 1-800-323-8603.

Who is eligible to apply under the FP&S Activity?

Eligible applicants for the FP&S Activity include fire departments, any federally recognized Indian tribe or tribal organization, and national, regional, state, local, tribal, and nonprofit interest organizations that are recognized for their experience and expertise in fire prevention and safety programs and activities.

How do I determine whether I represent a fire department or a national, regional, state, local, tribal, or nonprofit interest organization?

- A **fire department** is an agency or organization that has a formally recognized arrangement with a state, territory, local government, or tribal authority (city, county, parish, fire district, township, town, village, or other governing body) to provide fire suppression on a first-due basis to a fixed geographical area. Fire departments may be comprised of members who are volunteer, career, or a combination of volunteer and career.
- A **national, regional, state, local, tribal, or nonprofit interest organization** is an organization that is recognized for their experience and expertise with respect to fire prevention or fire safety programs. Fire departments applying for a regional FP&S Activity project on behalf of itself and other participating fire departments are not considered an interest organization.

Be sure to select the appropriate applicant type when applying. Applications submitted under the wrong applicant type will be deemed ineligible. For example, a fire department applicant that is submitting a regional fire safety trailer application should select “Fire Department/Fire District” from the “Applicant Type” dropdown in the grant application, rather than “National, Regional, State, Local, Tribal, and Nonprofit Interest Organization.”

What activities may I apply for under the FP&S Grant Program?

The FP&S Program is separated into two activities:

- **FP&S Activity**: Provides federal financial assistance to fire departments and national, regional, state, local, federally recognized tribal, or nonprofit interest organizations that are recognized for their experience and expertise in fire prevention and safety programs to reach high-risk target groups and mitigate the incidence of death and injuries caused by fire and fire-related hazards. Applicants may apply for up to three separate projects within this activity. The period of performance for projects funded under the FP&S Activity is generally 12 months. Eligible applicants who propose complex projects, such as those under the National/State/Regional Programs and Projects category, may apply for up to a 24-month period of performance from the date of award. Eligible project categories include:

    - Community Risk Reduction (Smoke Alarms, Sprinkler Awareness, Risk Assessments, Public Education, Training, General Prevention/Awareness, Juvenile Fire Setter Projects);
    - Wildfire Risk Reduction;
    - Code Enforcement/Awareness;
    - Fire & Arson Investigation; and
    - National/State/Regional Programs and Projects.

    Applicants requesting a Risk Assessment project are precluded from applying for or being awarded additional projects. All applicants are subject to a 5% cost share.

- **R&D Activity:** Provides funding to national, state, local, federally recognized tribal, and non-profit organizations, such as academic (e.g., universities), research foundations, public safety institutes, public health, occupational health, and injury prevention institutions to improve firefighter safety, health, or well-being through research and development that reduces firefighter fatalities and injuries. Fire departments are not eligible to apply for funding in this Activity. Applicants may apply for up to three separate projects within this activity. The period of performance is 12, 24, 36 or 48 months from the date of award. Proposed projects must address the potential for a successful research outcome to be implemented in the fire service and reduce firefighter fatalities or injuries. Eligible project categories include:

    - Clinical Studies;
    - Technology and Product Development;

- Preliminary Studies; and
- Early Career Investigator.

All applicants are subject to a 5% cost share.

For more information regarding the R&D Activity, reference the Tips and Guidelines for FP&S R&D Applicants.

How many applications may I submit?

Eligible applicants may submit only one application for each eligible activity under the FP&S Grant Program (one application under the FP&S Activity and/or one application under the R&D Activity). Up to three projects may be included in a grant application under the FP&S Activity and up to three projects may be included in a grant application under the R&D Activity. Eligible Applicants interested in applying under both the FP&S Activity and the R&D Activity must submit two separate applications, one for each activity; application questions differ based on the application type. Submissions of duplicate applications may be disqualified.

Example 1

A community has a strategic goal of reducing the number of fires caused by the use of barbecue grills on the balconies of apartments. The applicant plans to:

- Launch a public education project; and
- Strengthen code enforcement activities.

Attainment of this goal will be supported through two projects. Although both projects aim to reach the same goal, the projects are independent of one another and may be funded as such. Therefore, the public education items would be listed as one supporting project and the code enforcement items listed as the second supporting project, both under one FP&S Activity application.

Although both projects will be included in one application, the projects must be independent in that the completion of one project, or any tasks within that project, does not depend on the funding of the other project. Each project requires its own separate supporting budget and narrative statement explaining how accomplishing these independent projects will help achieve the overall goal.

Example 2

A community or organization may have more than one strategic goal depending on its audience or risk. For example, a national organization may have a goal to reduce firefighter fatalities through a national outreach project. It may also have a goal to implement an online training program. The organization would create one project for firefighter safety initiatives and a second project for the online training program. Both projects can be included in one application under the FP&S Activity.

I have an open FP&S Grant Program award(s). May I still apply under the current FP&S Grant Program?

Yes. However, because the possibility exists that the period of performance on the open grant award(s) and the new grant period of performance will overlap, you need to ensure that the start of your new grant does not depend on the completion of your open grant(s), or that receipt of a new FP&S Grant Program award will not impact your ability to continue with and/or complete your open grant award(s). The grant activities requested in the new FP&S Grant Program cannot duplicate activities, expenditures, or personnel funded under the open grant award(s). Applicants with an active FP&S Grant Program award who wish to apply under the open FP&S Grant Program are subject to the guidelines and requirements outlined in the FP&S Grant Program NOFO.

How much funding is available under the FP&S Grant Program?

The *Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2024* (Pub. L. No. 118-47) appropriated a total of $324 million to carry out the activities of the FP&S Grant Program. Please review the FP&S Grant Program NOFO for specific information on the funding available for the fiscal year that you wish to apply.

What is the maximum amount of funding a recipient may be awarded?

The total amount of funding a recipient may receive under an FP&S Grant Program award is limited to a maximum federal share of $1.5 million set by §33(d)(2) of the *Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act* of 1974, Pub. L. 93-498, as amended (15 U.S.C. § 2229(d)(2)). The maximum federal share of $1.5 million is the total that may be requested under all six projects (up to three projects in a grant application under the FP&S Activity and up to three projects in a grant application under the R&D Activity). For multi-year projects, applicants may divide the $1.5 million over the period of performance however they deem necessary.

Is there a cost share for all applicants?

Yes. In general, an applicant shall agree to make available non-federal funds in an amount equal to and not less than 5% of the grant awarded. FEMA has developed a cost share calculator tool to assist applicants with determining their cost share. The cost share tool is available on the FEMA website at [Fire Prevention and Safety Documents.]()

FEMA GO also automatically calculates the cost share in the Budget Summary section of the application. Therefore, applicants should make sure to include total project costs, including cost share, when creating the budget line items/cards in the FEMA GO application. If an applicant does not enter the cost share as a budget line item/card (or as part of several budget line items/cards), then the federal share may be lower than anticipated. Please check the Budget Summary of the FEMA GO application very carefully to ensure that the federal share and cost share are correct prior to submitting the application.

All recipients should ensure that they are thoroughly familiar with FEMA's cost sharing requirements, as well as appropriate cost principles identified at 2 C.F.R. Part 200 Subpart E. The recipient is not required to have the cost share at the time of application. However, before a grant is awarded, FEMA may contact potential recipients to determine whether they have the funding in hand or if they have a viable plan to obtain the funding necessary to fulfill the cost sharing requirement.

NOTE: The Administrator of FEMA may waive or reduce cost share requirements in cases of demonstrated economic hardship. For more information, please refer to the NOFO, Appendix C. Award Administration Information, b. Economic Hardship Waivers of Cost Share and Maintenance of Effort.

Types of Contributions:

- Cash (Hard Match):
  - Cost share of non-federal cash is allowable for FP&S Program grants.
- In-kind (Soft Match):
  - In-kind cost share is allowable for FP&S Program grants. This includes using the values for the following in-kind contributions to meet the cost share requirement:
    - Complementary activities (such as providing additional smoke alarms for installation or educational materials for public education); and
    - Provision of staff, facilities, services, materials, or equipment.
  - In-kind is the value of something received or provided that does not have a cost associated with it. For example, the value of donated services could be used to comply with the match requirement. Also, third party in-kind contributions may count toward satisfying match requirements, provided the recipient receiving the contributions expends them as allowable costs in compliance with the provisions listed in the NOFO.
  - Recipients who use in-kind contributions for their 5% cost share must comply with all applicable regulations and 2 C.F.R. Part 200.306 regarding matching or cost-sharing.

Which internet browsers are compatible with FEMA GO?

FEMA GO is compatible with the most recent major release of Google Chrome, Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Apple Safari, and Microsoft Edge. Users who attempt to use tablet type devices or other browsers may encounter issues with using FEMA GO.

When can I apply?

Applications will only be accepted during the application period outlined in the NOFO. FEMA GO automatically records proof of timely submission and the system generates an electronic date/time stamp when FEMA GO successfully receives the application. The individual with the Authorized Organization Representative role that submitted the application will also receive the official date/time stamp and a FEMA GO tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission on the date and time that FEMA GO received the application.

Applications not received by the application submission deadline will not be accepted. Applicants should ensure they have adequate time to submit the FEMA GO application if using slow or unreliable internet connections.

Applicants experiencing system-related issues have until 3 p.m. ET on the date applications are due to notify FEMA. No new system-related issues will be addressed after that deadline.

Do I need to register with the System for Award Management (SAM)?

Yes. Per 2 C.F.R. § 25.205, SAM registration is required to both begin and submit an FP&S Grant Program application in the FEMA GO system. Organizational SAM.gov registrations are only active for one year and must be renewed annually. Therefore, applicants must ensure the applicant entity has a valid and active registration in SAM.gov before starting an application. If they do not already have one, organizations will be issued a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) with the completed SAM registration.

Step-by-step instructions for registering with SAM can be found at SAM.gov | Entity Registrations. Applicants should contact SAM.gov with questions or concerns about their SAM registration.

Applicants are advised that FEMA may not make a federal award until the applicant has complied with all applicable SAM requirements. Therefore, an applicant's SAM registration must be active not only at the time of application, but also during the application review period and when FEMA is ready to make a federal award. Further, as noted above, an applicant's or recipient's SAM registration must remain active for the duration of an active federal award. If an applicant's SAM registration is expired at the time of application, expires during application review, or expires any other time before award, FEMA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

More information on SAM.gov is included in the FP&S Grant Program NOFO and on the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Progams Website. If applicants have questions or concerns about a SAM registration, please contact the Federal Support Desk at https://www.fsd.gov/ or call (866) 606-8220, Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET.

May I change or edit my application after it has been submitted?

You will be able to review or edit the entire application prior to submission. However, if you would like to edit or change your application after submission, you will have to withdraw the application from consideration of award. The application must then be resubmitted to FEMA before the application submission deadline to be considered for an award.

How can I obtain help with the application?

The FP&S Grant Program Help Desk at 866-274-0960 will be available to provide technical assistance with completing your FP&S Grant Program application(s).

During the application period, the Help Desk will be staffed from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday; and until 5 p.m. ET on the last day of the application period. However, these hours may change as the application period progresses. The toll-free number also accepts voicemail messages after hours or if the line is busy. Questions may also be e-mailed to FireGrants@fema.dhs.gov.

Where can I find FP&S Grant Program documents and other information?

You can find FP&S Grant Program documents and additional information on the Fire Prevention and Safety Grant Program Webpage.

When will the awards be announced?

Award announcements will be made in the summer and on a continuous basis until all available funds have been awarded, but no later than September 30th. Recipients are notified via email and through the FEMA GO system of the award offer.

How long do I have to accept the FP&S Grant Program award?

Recipients must accept their awards no later than 30 days from the award date. The recipient must notify FEMA of its intent to accept and proceed with work under the award through the FEMA GO system. Funds will remain on hold until the recipient accepts the award through the FEMA GO system and all other conditions of the award have been satisfied or until the award is otherwise rescinded. Failure to accept a grant award within the specified timeframe may result in a loss of funds. Recipients may request additional time to accept the award if needed.

When an FP&S Grant Program award is accepted, when does the period of performance start?

The period of performance for projects funded under the FP&S Activity starts on the date of award and is generally 12 months. Eligible applicants who propose complex projects, such as those under the National/State/Regional Programs and Projects category, may apply for up to a 24-month period of performance.

How do I sign-up for e-mail notifications about the FP&S Grant Program?

To register for automatic e-mail notices of NOFO availability and other important program information go to Signup for FEMA Email Updates.

What is program income?

Although not common, recipients may generate income in the course of carrying out grant-supported activities during the period of performance under the FP&S Grant Program award. This is referred to as program income. This income can be used to defray program costs, where appropriate, consistent with 2 CFR § 200.307. The Budget Summary section of the grant application contains a field for program income. The response should be $0 unless the recipient anticipates generating program income during the period of performance. If the recipient plans to generate program income, it should be explained in the narrative. The FEMA GO application will not include program income estimates in the total budget. FEMA will review the program income submitted and adjust the budget as appropriate, prior to award. Any program income must be used and managed in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.307.

What is Management and Administration (M&A)?

M&A costs are administrative expenses that are incurred during the administration of an FP&S Grant Program award. Applicants may apply for M&A costs if the costs are directly related to the implementation of the program for which they are applying. M&A costs are identifiable costs directly associated with the implementation and management of the grant and cannot exceed 3% of the federal share of FP&S Grant Program funds awarded. If you are requesting M&A expenses, you must list the costs under the "Other" category in the budget and explain the purpose for the administrative costs in your Project Narrative. All M&A costs must be in accordance with 2 C.F.R. Part 225, Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments (OMB Circular A-87) or 2 C.F.R. Part 230, Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations (OMB Circular A-122), as applicable and should be based on actual expenses only, not a percentage of the overall grant.

Where do I submit the federally approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement?

Copies of the indirect cost rate agreements or proposals, along with the FP&S Grant Program application number, must be submitted electronically to FireGrants@fema.dhs.gov. Please ensure that the request details portion of your application includes information pertaining to your indirect cost rate agreement or proposal.

I do not have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement. May I charge a de minimis rate as part of project costs?

Yes, certain applicants that do not have a current negotiated (including provisional) indirect cost rate may elect to charge a *de minimis* rate of 15% of modified total direct costs, which may be used indefinitely. As described in 2 C.F.R § 200.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology, once selected, must be used consistently for all federal awards until such time as a non-federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-federal entity may apply to do at any time. See 2 C.F.R § 200.414(f) to determine if your entity is eligible to apply for the *de minimis* rate.

Does my project have to address children, seniors, or firefighters?

You must determine the target population that is at risk in your community. You do not have to conform to national statistics to be eligible for funding. You need to justify how you determined the target population, how your proposed project will address the community's vulnerability and benefit the target population. In addition, you need to ensure your solution is age-appropriate for that target population.

Are sprinkler systems eligible for funding?

Installation of sprinkler systems for demonstration-only purposes are eligible for funding only if proposed as part of a comprehensive sprinkler demonstration/educational effort.

May I include grant writer fees in the application?

Yes. However, for grant writer fees to be eligible, the services must be competitively sourced, specifically identified, and listed within the "Grant Request Details" section of the application and must satisfy the requirements under 2

C.F.R. § 200.458. Additionally, the costs must be paid between the 90 days prior to the publication date of the FP&S Grant Program NOFO and up to 30 days after the application period closes. Fees payable on a contingency basis are not an eligible expense.

When adding the grant writer fee to the “Grant Request Details” section of an application, select “Add Activity” and choose “Grant Writer Fee” from the menu of options.

My entity is a fire department and would like to apply for a fire safety trailer. How do I add the trailer to the application?

First, navigate to the “Applicant Characteristics” section of the application. Select “Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S)” in response to the question “Which activity are you applying for?”

Next, select “Fire Department/Fire District” from the “Applicant Characteristics” section of the application.

Next, navigate to the “Grant Request Details” of the application. Select “Add Activity” and choose “Community Risk Reduction” from the menu of options. Then click “Confirm.” Finally, select “Add Project to Community Risk Reduction.” Select “Public Education” from the menu of options. Click “Confirm.”

What are residual supplies?

Residual supplies are supplies that remain unused at the end of the grant period of performance. If there is a residual inventory of unused supplies exceeding $10,000 in total aggregate value upon termination or completion of the project or program and the supplies are not needed for any other federal award, the non-federal entity may retain the supplies for use on other activities or sell them, but in either case must compensate the Federal Government for its share. Therefore, applicants should make sure to request funds for supplies (including smoke alarms) that can be used, distributed, and/or installed during the grant period of performance. See 2 C.F.R § 200.314(a) for additional information.

Are smoke alarms considered “supplies” or “equipment”?

Smoke alarms are considered “supplies” rather than “equipment.” Equipment means tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or $10,000.

Supplies means all tangible personal property other than those described in the definition of equipment.

How are the FP&S Activity applications reviewed and selected for funding?

All FP&S Activity applications will be evaluated and scored competitively by no less than three members of a Peer Review Panel. The panel of peer reviewers is comprised of fire service representatives recommended by the Criteria Development Panel (CDP). Peer reviewers will assess the merits of each project within the application based on the evaluation elements listed in the “Narrative Evaluation Criteria” section of the FP&S Grant Program NOFO. Panelists will independently score each requested activity within the application, and if necessary, discuss the merits and/or shortcomings of the application with his or her peers, and document the findings. A consensus is not required.

Note that Fire Departments and Interest Organizations are assigned differing weights for each scored element.

What are the requirements for submitting a regional grant application?

A regional project is an opportunity for an eligible FP&S Activity organization to act as a host and apply for funding on behalf of itself and any number of other participating FP&S Activity-eligible organizations. Regional activities should achieve cost effectiveness, support regional efficiency and resilience, and have a direct regional or local benefit to more than one local jurisdiction (county, parish, town, township, city, or village). Direct regional or local benefit means that other eligible organizations will receive a portion of the grant awarded funds, will receive items purchased with the grant funds, or share an item purchased with grant funds.

The community identification characteristic, the organizational status of the applicant, and the permanent resident population should be entered for the host entity, regardless of the composition of the participating partners.

Regional populations served are the aggregate of the geographically fixed areas of the host and participating partner organizations.

Neither the regional host nor any participating partner is prevented from also applying on behalf of their own organization for any FP&S Activity or R&D Activity project; however, it cannot be for the same item. For example, a department cannot apply for smoke alarms under its own organization and participate in a regional smoke alarm project.

In completing the application, the applicant must include a list of all participating organizations, including a point of contact and phone number for each organization that will directly benefit from the regional project if they receive the grant. The organizations that will benefit from the regional project may also apply for funding under the FP&S Activity as long as the organizations do not apply for a project or activity that could conflict with or duplicate the host applicant's project. Applicants must also certify that they will ensure the organizations participating in this application have not received grants for similar items/activities.

In order to apply for a regional project, the host organization must agree, if awarded, to be responsible for all aspects of the grant. This includes but is not limited to cost share, accountability for the assets, and all reporting requirements in the regional application.

All participants of a regional application must be compliant with FP&S Program requirements, including being current with past grants, closeouts, and other reporting requirements. Upon notification by the FP&S Program Office, the host agency shall not distribute grant-funded assets or provide grant-funded contractual services to non-compliant partner organizations. The host and the delinquent partners will be notified by the FP&S Program Office of their specific deficiency.

Regional host applicants and participating partner agencies must execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), or equivalent document signed by the host and all participating organizations participating in the award. The MOU must specify the individual and mutual responsibilities of the host and participating partners, the host's and participants' level of involvement in the project(s), the participating partners' EINs, and the proposed distribution of all grant-funded assets or contracted services. Any entity named in the application as benefiting from the award must be an eligible FP&S Program organization and must be a party to the MOU or equivalent document. **Copies of the MOU or equivalent document should be submitted as an attachment in the application.**

Are there formatting requirements for narrative responses in the FEMA GO application?

Yes. Only plain text is allowed within the FP&S Activity Narrative Statement blocks of the application in FEMA GO. Do not type the Narrative Statements using only capital letters. Additionally, do not include tables, special characters, or fonts (e.g., quotation marks, bullets), or graphs. Space for the Narrative Statements in FEMA GO is limited. While each element must have a minimum of 200 characters, the maximum number of characters varies based on the questions being asked.

What are some tips for preparing a competitive application under the FP&S Activity?

- For the most competitive applications, select the local need(s) that most closely align with one or more FP&S Program funding priorities.

- Applications differ based on the applicant type. For example, the application will be different for a fire department than an interest organization applying for the same FP&S Activity. Be sure to select the appropriate applicant type when applying.

- When filling out the online application, applicants are required to provide basic demographic information regarding their organization and the community served and must provide detailed information regarding the items or activities for which they are seeking funding.

- When adding costs to the application, applicants must include total project costs (including both the federal and non-federal portion) to ensure that the cost share is correctly calculated.

- A community risk assessment should be used to document the "risk" as a basis for mitigation. If the applicant has evidence of a community risk, the application should be based on solving the problem that will reduce the risk. A risk analysis should be the foundation of the application.

- FEMA encourages applicants designing fire prevention initiatives to utilize the "Fire is Everyone's Fight™" campaign from the United States Fire Administration (USFA). This program uses a wide range of resources to communicate the importance of taking action to protect ourselves and the people we love from the dangers of fire. "Fire is Everyone's Fight™" is designed to unite the fire service and many others in a collaborative effort to reduce home fire injuries, deaths, and property loss. It invites fire departments, safety advocates, community groups, schools, and others to rally behind a common and compelling theme. USFA and its partners will communicate and reinforce key lessons across many proven fire safety and prevention initiatives and programs, available at Fire Is Everyone's Fight.

What is a comprehensive fire and life safety education program?

A comprehensive education program goes beyond awareness of risk factors. It is based on a plan that contains elements designed to result in knowledge gain, application of knowledge, and ultimately, behavior change based upon understanding and acceptance of new knowledge and skills. The five-step planning process, as developed by the USFA, is used for the design, implementation, and evaluation of comprehensive education programs. Important steps in the process include risk analysis, community partners, intervention strategy, implementation, and evaluation. An intervention strategy that incorporates multiple Es (Education, Engineering, and Enforcement) has the best chance of making a measurable difference.

Note: More information on the five-step planning process can be found in the U.S. Fire Administration's "Public Fire Education Planning: A Five-Step Process" guide.

EXAMPLE

People learn best when information is presented simply, repeated often, sustained over a period of time, and practiced. This is especially true when educating children about fire and life safety. A comprehensive education program using a fire safety trailer might look like this:

- Risk Analysis: The fire department uses local incident data to identify and prioritize the types of fires occurring in the community. The program planning team ensures appropriate educational messages are included to address the fire problems that are causing these incidents. They focus attention and resources in specific areas or neighborhoods where fire calls are most frequent.

- Community Partners: The fire department reaches out to schools in the neighborhoods at highest risk of fire to schedule a safety trailer visit. They partner with classroom teachers, who work with the students ahead of time to prepare for the visit. The teacher introduces key fire safety concepts, along with vocabulary words the firefighters will use during the visit.

- Intervention Strategy: The safety trailer is used as a hands-on tool for students to learn and practice what they know about fire safety. Lessons are tailored to the age and ability of the students. For example, the smoke feature is not used for a classroom of preschoolers, as this would frighten some of the children.

- Implementation: The trailer visit is implemented as part of a three-part implementation strategy - before, during, and after. BEFORE the visit, teachers prepare students about what they will learn and do when the trailer visits their school. DURING the visit, firefighters explain key safety messages in simple terms and give students a chance to practice what to do. AFTER the visit, teachers talk with students about what they learned, and encourage them to test their smoke alarms and practice a home fire drill with their families. The teachers help identify families that do not have smoke alarms. When possible, the fire department follows up with these families to install smoke alarms in these homes and educate the parents and caregivers about fire safety. Use of multiple Es might be appropriate lessons (Education) combined with free smoke alarm installation (Engineering) according to code requirements (Enforcement).

- Evaluation: With the teacher's help, the fire department conducts a follow up session with the students in class to review lessons learned and gauge sustained knowledge. Additionally, with assistance from the school, the fire department may send home a parent survey to determine how many homes installed smoke alarms, tested smoke alarms, and practiced a family fire drill since the visit. The fire department would then compare current local incident data with the data collected during the risk analysis to determine the impact of the program.

What types of costs may be impacted by the Build America, Buy America Act (BABAA)?

The Build America, Buy America Act (BABAA) requires that none of the funds provided under the FP&S Grant Program may be used for a project for infrastructure unless the iron and steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used in that infrastructure are produced in the United States.

The Buy America preference only applies to articles, materials, and supplies that are consumed in, incorporated into, or affixed to an infrastructure project.

Infrastructure is defined as "infrastructure projects which serve a public function, including at a minimum, the structures, facilities, and equipment for, in the United States, roads, highways, and bridges; public transportation; dams, ports, harbors, and other maritime facilities; intercity passenger and freight railroads; freight and intermodal facilities; airports; water systems, including drinking water and wastewater systems; electrical transmission facilities and systems; utilities; broadband infrastructure; and buildings and real property; and structures, facilities, and equipment that generate, transport, and distribute energy."

See the FP&S Grant Program NOFO for information about BABAA. If your project includes installation, repair or a modification to a facility, your entity may be required to comply with BABAA.

What is the difference between the R&D Activity and the National/State/Regional Programs and Projects category under the FP&S Activity?

Research is conducted under the R&D Activity, not the FP&S Activity. Research means a systematic investigation, including development, testing, and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Research should be conducted in accordance with suitable methodologies set by specific professional fields and academic disciplines. If a study aims to conduct research that can be generalized nationwide, especially if it involves human subjects, then the application must be made through the R&D Activity so appropriate reviews (for funding) and monitoring (if awarded) can be conducted. Additionally,

- Projects to determine effectiveness of firefighter safety, health, or well-being programs, policies or products must be applied for under the R&D Activity.
- Projects requiring Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval to work with human subjects must be applied for under the R&D Activity.

The National/State/Regional Programs and Projects category under the FP&S Activity includes projects that:

1. Focus on residential fire issues;

2. Focus on firefighter safety, health, and well-being by dissemination and implementation of programs, policies or products from previous research studies that used rigorous scientific methods to determine effectiveness; and/or

3. Do not include a research component.

Projects requiring IRB approval to work with human subjects are not eligible under the National/State/Regional Programs and Projects category. Projects with an IRB exemption determination may be eligible. Unless otherwise directed by the FP&S Program Office, the IRB exemption determination letter and IRB application must be provided at time of application.

What are the requirements for human subjects research?

DHS/FEMA has a responsibility to ensure that mechanisms and procedures are in place to protect the safety of human subjects in DHS/FEMA-supported research. DHS requirements are set forth in 6 C.F.R. Part 46. A grant recipient must agree to meet all DHS requirements for projects using human subjects (and ensure any subrecipients or subcontractors meet those requirements) prior to implementing any work with human subjects. For the definition of “research” and “human subjects,” please see Appendix B – Programmatic Information and Priorities, Section b, Supporting Definitions for this NOFO.

If a project involves human subjects, the project must undergo review by an Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB must provide an approval or exemption determination. In addition, the DHS Compliance Assurance Program Office (CAPO) must review and concur with the IRB approval or exemption determination. Both IRB approval/exemption and DHS CAPO concurrence must precede any project activities involving human subjects.

Important: Under the FP&S Activity, projects requiring IRB approval to work with human subjects are not eligible. Projects with an IRB exemption determination may be eligible.

Examples of projects that typically need IRB and DHS CAPO oversight may include (but are not limited to) :

- Individuals that participate in laboratory or field testing of devices or tactics using methods, equipment or devices outside of standard or proven methods;
- Individuals that participate in intervention trials;
- Individuals that participate in qualitative interviews or focus groups during which they provide personal information, opinions or feedback identifiable to the individual;
- Collection or use of biologic samples; or
- Animals.

Examples of projects possibly not needing IRB and DHS CAPO oversight may include (but are not limited to) individuals that:

- Answer questions on factual aspects (specifications) of things, products or policies, rather than answering questions about people;
- Provide data about department statistics (such as number of employees, call volume, or types of fire calls);

- Answer questions about general business-related information;
- Carry passive sampling equipment; or
- Do not provide personal identifiers.

If an applicant is unsure of the need for IRB and DHS CAPO oversight, the applicant must:

- Obtain an opinion from an IRB and/or submit the project for IRB review; or
- Obtain an opinion from DHS CAPO by contacting the FP&S Program Office. The FP&S Program Office will serve as a liaison to DHS CAPO.

Before enrolling participants or commencing projects involving human subjects, an applicant must:

- Obtain a review of the project by an internal or third-party IRB or obtain an initial review by the DHS CAPO.
- If the IRB determines an exempt or non-exempt status, provide a copy of the following to the FP&S Program Office for review by DHS CAPO:
  - Investigators full name(s);
  - Grant number;
  - Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) Federal-Wide Assurance (FWA) Number;
  - IRB registry number for the IRB of Record (IRB0000XXXX);
  - IRB Panel Number (if reviewed by the full board);
  - IRB approval or exemption memo (ensure the level of risk and review category is included);
  - IRB approved protocol;
  - Complete application submitted to the IRB;
  - Any applicable IRB-approved surveys/questionnaires and recruitment materials (supporting documentation should be stamped by the IRB with the approval date and version number);
  - IRB-approved informed consent forms or an IRB-approved waiver of informed consent with DHS listed as the sponsor (or a provide a justification for the exclusion of this information); and
  - If applicable, the IRB approved modification letter if this is a modification of an existing approved protocol.

- **Note:** If this is a multi-site study and the additional sites are receiving DHS funding, DHS CAPO will need this same information from the other sites as well.

The FP&S Program Office will provide the above-mentioned documentation to DHS CAPO. DHS CAPO will conduct a regulatory compliance assessment and forward comments or concerns to the FP&S Program Office and the applicant. The applicant must address in writing all regulatory concerns to the satisfaction of DHS CAPO, which may require the submission of revisions to the IRB. The DHS CAPO will then issue a letter of certification or concurrence with the IRB's determination of exempt or non-exempt status. Only then may work with human subjects begin, such as participant enrollment. However, development of tools (e.g., survey instruments), protocols, and data gathering approaches may proceed prior to DHS CAPO certification. Grant recipients must prepare and submit documents to the IRB and DHS CAPO as soon as possible to avoid delays with project implementation.

The grant recipient must also submit annual reports to DHS CAPO to include evidence of subsequent IRB reviews, amendments, or any changes of protocol.

If there is a continuing review, applicants should submit the following:

- IRB approval letters,
- Continuing review applications, and
- Modified documents, recruitment documents, informed consents, or changes of protocol.

If there is an amendment or modification, applicants should submit the following:

- IRB approval letters,
- Amendment or modification applications, and
- Modified study documents.

If there is a study closure, applicants should submit the following:

- IRB acknowledgement of closure, and
- Closure report or final summary of study submitted to IRB.