

# How to Navigate Project Scoping and Phased Project Types for Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities and Flood Mitigation Assistance

This overview offers information to assist applicants and subapplicants in determining how to approach project scoping and phased project applications for the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) and Flood Mitigation Assistance.

Both phased projects and project scoping activity types provide opportunities for subapplicants to pursue BRIC and Flood Mitigation Assistance funding if they do not have the capability or capacity to meet all the requirements of a project subapplication.

Phased projects are complex projects where FEMA provides funding to subapplicants to develop the necessary technical and environmental information, including design, engineering studies, final benefit cost analysis (BCA) and permitting, before issuing full construction approval for a project. Phased projects are used when a subapplicant has a preliminary plan or concept allowing FEMA to make initial eligibility, technical feasibility, and cost-effectiveness determinations.

Project scoping can allow for problem evaluation, analysis of alternatives and development of a project concept or initial design in addition to all the tasks eligible for a phased project. Phased project mitigation activities differ from project scoping activities as shown in Table 1

Table 1: Phased Project v Project Scoping Mitigation Activities

Phased Projects		Project Scoping
<b>Phase I activities could include:</b>	<b>Phase II activities could include:</b>	<b>Project Scoping Activities could include:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hydrologic and Hydraulic (H&amp;H) Studies</li><li>• Geotechnical studies</li><li>• Advanced/final project design</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final design</li><li>• EHP review</li><li>• Construction</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Alternative analysis</li><li>• Data gathering</li><li>• Conceptual design(s)</li></ul>



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Phased Projects		Project Scoping
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Historic Preservation (EHP) data analysis</li> <li>• Preliminary BCA</li> <li>• Initial EHP review</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost estimate(s)</li> </ul>

Read more about BRIC [eligibility](#) and [EHP](#) requirements and Flood Mitigation Assistance [eligibility](#) and [EHP](#) requirements for both activities.

## Phased Projects

The purpose of a phased project is to support the development of subapplication materials when it is beyond the subapplicant’s technical and financial resources to provide the information necessary to complete a full subapplication with engineering studies, engineering design, final BCA, and documentation of the Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) review.

- For **BRIC**, phased projects are eligible for funding under the State and Territory Allocation, Tribal Set-Aside, and National Competition funding categories.
- For **Flood Mitigation Assistance**, phased projects are eligible for funding under the Localized Flood Risk Reduction Project funding category.

Phased projects should be used when:

1. It’s necessary to support the development of subapplication materials when it is beyond the subapplicant’s technical and financial resources to produce the required technical information.
2. A subapplicant has a preliminary plan or concept where FEMA can make an initial eligibility determination. A subapplicant can validate if the project has reached this level of completion by referring to the phased project pre-screening process outlined on **pages 24-29** in the [Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program and Policy Guide](#). If FEMA cannot determine compliance to all the criteria based on the documentation provided by the subapplicant, the subapplication cannot be recommended for selection as a phased project.

These requirements are necessary to be able to determine if a phased project is technically feasible and cost-effective. Some of the key elements of the pre-screening process include that the project:

- Has been selected from an analysis of alternatives,
- Has a preliminary feasibility study, plan or concept,
- Has a preliminary cost estimate that has been developed together with a preliminary BCA.

If selected, during Phase I, FEMA will work with the subapplicant and applicant to identify the technical information required to determine project eligibility. This information may consist of a combination of engineering or feasibility studies, preliminary engineering design, a BCA or documentation of an EHP review.

If the project is determined to be eligible, technically feasible, cost effective, and compliant with EHP requirements under the technical review of Phase I deliverables, the project may then be approved for construction under Phase II.

If a project is not shown to be cost-effective or technically feasible after Phase I completion, FEMA still funds the costs of Phase I. However, Phase II funding is not guaranteed and is instead contingent upon the outcomes of the evaluation of the Phase I deliverables.

**Note** - In general, a contractor who develops the HMA grant application project specifications or is contracted to provide direct assistance with the completion and submission of a grant application, is prohibited from competing for the related construction work. [See Title 2 Code of Federal Regulations Section 200.319](#) (b) and subsection H.7.b: Procurement Integrity: Competition and Conflicts of interest of the BRIC funding opportunity.

## Project Scoping

Project scoping activities are designed to develop mitigation strategies and obtain data to prioritize, select, and develop, in a timely manner, complete applications 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 **Flood Mitigation Assistance**, project scoping can be used to obtain data and to prioritize, select, and develop future Localized Flood Risk Reduction Projects and/or Individual Flood Mitigation Projects based on current FEMA-approved mitigation plans. Project Scoping subapplications will be evaluated to ensure that the result will lead to an eligible project subapplication that will provide benefits to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

FEMA encourages the use of, and provides financial assistance for, project scoping as an eligible capability and capacity-building (C&CB) activity.

- For **BRIC**, project scoping subapplications can be funded under the State and Territory Allocation, Tribal Set-Aside, and National Competition funding categories.
- For **Flood Mitigation Assistance**, project scoping subapplications can be funded under the Capability and Capacity Building (C&CB) activities category.

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.

## Project Scoping in the BRIC National Competition

For the fiscal year (FY) 2024, FEMA will assign up to 10% of the BRIC National Competition funding for project scoping activities.

Project scoping subapplications may be submitted to the State or Territory Allocation, Tribal Set-Aside, and the National Competition. Project scoping subapplications in the National Competition will be reviewed for eligibility and

completeness like all other project scoping subapplications in the allocations and set-aside. Applicants may submit an unlimited number of project scoping subapplications to the National Competition.

If the total requested federal share for the eligible project scoping subapplications submitted to the National Competition is under the available funding (up to 10% of the National Competition), no scoring will be necessary since all the eligible project scoping subapplications could be selected. If requested funds for eligible project scoping subapplications submitted to the National Competition are above the available competitive project scoping funding (i.e., oversubscription), project scoping subapplications will be scored using existing program evaluation criteria as described in the NOFO. Technical and qualitative evaluation criteria Program Support Materials can be found in the resources section below.

Similar to other project scoping subapplications in the program, the project scoping submitted to the National Competition will not be evaluated for technical feasibility or cost-effectiveness, and therefore will not be sent to the National Technical Review.

## Additional Information and Resources

- BRIC or Flood Mitigation Assistance program questions can be directed to the Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) Helpline at 1-866-222-3580.
- Applicants set their subapplicant deadlines, which may differ from the FEMA BRIC or Flood Mitigation Assistance application deadlines. Applicant deadlines can be found on respective state emergency management websites, or you can contact your [State or Territory Hazard Mitigation Officer](#).
- More information on other BRIC programmatic requirements can be found in the BRIC NOFO, available on [Grants.gov](#) or on the [FEMA Notice of Funding Opportunity web page](#).
- More information on other Flood Mitigation Assistance programmatic requirements can be found in the funding opportunity on [Grants.gov](#) or on the [FEMA Notice of Funding Opportunity webpage](#).
- For information on phased projects, refer to the 2024 [HMA Program and Policy Guide](#).
- For additional information related to [BRIC Direct Technical Assistance \(BRIC DTA\)](#), refer to the [BRIC Direct Technical Assistance \(DTA\) Program Support Material](#).
- For additional information related to BRIC's competition criteria, refer to the [Technical Evaluation Criteria Program Support Material](#) and [Qualitative Evaluation Criteria Program Support Material](#).