

# Fiscal Year 2023 Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Selections

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## Background

On July 2, 2024 FEMA announced the selections for the fiscal year (FY) 2023 Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant cycle. FEMA is offering nearly \$1 billion in federal cost share for 656 subapplications that have been identified for further review. This does not mean an award will be granted immediately or in the future. With this status selection, there is available funding and the subapplicant may be asked to submit additional information to obligate and award the grant.

The agency also selected 93 communities and Tribal Nations for BRIC Direct Technical Assistance.

For this grant cycle, FEMA accelerated the announcement for selections to occur earlier than last year. FEMA is making awards sooner so state, local, tribal and territorial governments can begin their mitigation journey to make our nation safer and stronger against future disasters.

## Talking Points

- The BRIC grant program supports states, tribes, territories, and local communities as they reduce their hazard risk through direct technical assistance and mitigation projects.
- This effort highlights the importance of FEMA's continued commitment to "people first" and helping communities, families and businesses build climate resilience. It also aligns with the [2024 FEMA Year of Resilience](#) theme to build capacity to withstand tomorrow's hazards.
- For fiscal year 2023, FEMA made \$1 billion available for the BRIC program including approximately \$398 million in funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.
- FEMA has seen an upward trend of meeting and exceeding its Justice40 goal in both overall funding and competitive funding for the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program.
- To help applicants and subapplicants submit successful applications for funding, FEMA hosted a series of webinars that reached over 850 attendees. Nearly 90% of them felt the information was excellent or good.
  - In addition, FEMA created a number of program support materials that were readily accessible and easy to understand resulting in increased education of the priorities for this grant cycle. The high number of



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new subapplicants receiving competitive funding shows continued progress FEMA hopes to keep building on for future grant cycles.

- The Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Direct Technical Assistance (DTA) continues to prove its success. FEMA selected 19 subapplications from current BRIC DTA communities for a total of \$48.9 million in fiscal year 2023 BRIC grant funding.
- In total this grant cycle, FEMA received 1,234 subapplications for Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC), requesting \$5.66 billion in federal cost-share funding.
  - Subapplications came from all 50 states, 5 territories and the District of Columbia, 35 tribes, and 160 Economically Disadvantaged Rural Communities.
  - As in past years, the most requested activity types are Flood Control and Utility and Infrastructure Protection.
- FEMA has reduced the complexity of the BRIC grant program and increased access to funding. These changes include a focus on building codes and standards. In this grant cycle,
  - BRIC received 137 subapplications for more than \$57.6 million for the new Building Code Plus-Up set-aside funding opportunity—the largest amount ever requested for building codes.
  - This aligns with FEMA’s goal to increase the adoption and enforcement of stronger building codes and standards. It also supports the Biden-Harris Administration’s interagency efforts through the National Initiative to Advance Building Codes.
- We also exceeded its goal to expand the non-financial support through the BRIC Direct Technical Assistance. This grant cycle, FEMA selected 93 communities and Tribal nations to participate in this 36-month opportunity. This more than doubles the goal of fiscal year 2022 BRIC DTA selections (i.e., 40 selections).
- FEMA can provide a wide range of non-financial technical assistance for mitigation planning and project support to communities, tribal nations, and territories. This helps communities and tribes reduce disaster damage, build community resilience, and jumpstart their mitigation program. This year, FEMA received 170 requests from all 10 FEMA regions.
  - Of these requests, 135 came from communities, 31 from Tribal Nations and four territories.

## Highlights of Subapplication Selections

### Project Activity Types Summary

**TOP TWO PROJECT TYPES BY FEDERAL COST SHARE** (*including State and Territory Allocations, Tribal Set-Aside, Building Codes Plus-Up Set-Aside and National Competition*)

1. Flood Control = \$395 million

### **FEMA Selects 28 subapplications for this Eligible Project Type**

Flood risk reduction projects are designed to eliminate or reduce the frequency, extent, and water depth of floods. Flood sources for these projects could be coastal, riverine, rainfall events, or a combination of those. These projects may require environmental assessments and the construction of flood control structures. Projects can include greenspace, flood storage systems, channels or berms, or other flood prevention projects that reduce flooding impacts on homes and communities.

## **2. Utility/Infrastructure Protection = \$237 million**

### **FEMA Selects 30 subapplications for this Eligible Project Type**

Utility/Infrastructure Protection projects elevate, move, or improve critical infrastructure. Examples include elevating a pumping station, enhancing power poles to resist fire and/or wind, strengthening water towers, floodproofing water treatment plants or power facilities, etc.

## **Highlights of the Non-Competitive Selections for State or Territory Allocation, Tribal Set-Aside and Building Codes Plus-Up Available Funding**

- FEMA selected 600 subapplications totaling \$208 million.
- States, tribes, territories, and local communities may use this grant funding for mitigation planning, adoption, and enforcement of building codes and standards, project scoping and small-scale mitigation projects.
- **State or Territory Allocation**
  - FEMA selected 443 subapplications out of 517 submissions. This is approximately 85% of the subapplications submitted.
  - All states, five territories and the District of Columbia used their state and territory allocation.
  - FEMA selected 443 subapplications from 50 states and five territories. Recipients were selected for more than \$87 million in funding for hazard mitigation plan updates and other planning-related activities, partnership activities, project scoping, and hazard mitigation projects.
- **Tribal Set-Aside**

FEMA selected 29 subapplications from 23 tribes to receive approximately \$67.4 million for capability- and capacity-building activities such as partnerships, project scoping, hazard mitigation planning and planning-related activities and hazard mitigation projects.
- **Building Code Plus-Up Set Aside**
  - FEMA selected 129 subapplications totaling \$55.7 million. In support of a major FEMA priority and strategy, these funds support recipients to adopt and enforce hazard-resistant building codes.

- As a comparison, in fiscal years 2020-22, the program received 49 subapplications for building code activities. With this specific set-aside, in fiscal year 2023, BRIC received 137 building code subapplications, which is an 180% increase in building code subapplications submitted.
  - Of those, 94% of the submitted building code subapplications (129) were selected for \$55.7 million.
  - As part of the Tribal Set-Aside, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe was selected in the Tribal Set-Aside for these activities
- Three subapplications from territories:
  - Northern Mariana Islands
  - Puerto Rico
  - Virgin Islands

### Competitive Selections

- FEMA selected 56 subapplications for \$674.5 million this funding cycle.

### EQUITY

- The fiscal year 2023 BRIC selections further underscore the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to equity and environmental justice. These awards will assist the most disadvantaged communities in building resilience to climate change and extreme weather events. Aligning with the President's Justice40 Initiative, BRIC will advance the goal that 40% of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that may be overburdened by pollution and underinvestment.
- For this grant cycle, FEMA leveraged multiple tools to ensure we are delivering our Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program with equity. We also reviewed subapplications using the White House Council on Environmental Quality Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool to advance FEMA's commitment to Justice40. Also, Economically Disadvantaged Rural Communities, Community Disaster Resilience Zones, and tribal subapplications were also categorized as very high vulnerability, which gave them the maximum equity points in the BRIC National Competition.
- In total, \$587 million of the federal cost share or 67% is benefitting Justice40 communities.
  - FEMA has exceeded the Justice40 goal and will be delivering 67% of total funding in its FY23 BRIC grant cycle to Justice40 communities.
  - In the competition, 70% of selected federal cost share is contributing to Justice40 communities.

### Community Disaster Resilience Zones

- The [Community Disaster Resilience Zones Act](#) was signed into law by President Joseph R. Biden on Dec. 20, 2022. It requires FEMA to utilize a natural hazard risk assessment index to identify census tracts which are most at risk from the effects of natural hazards and climate change.

- \$127 million or 16% of the total federal cost share are benefitting communities with Community Disaster Resilience Zone census tracts.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF DATA OVER PREVIOUS GRANT CYCLES

- In comparing data and statistics from this grant cycle to the previous fiscal years of 2020–2022 grant cycles, these are some highlights of successes and improvements in BRIC selections.
  - West Virginia is a first-time recipient of competitive grant funds in this grant cycle.
  - 80% of subapplicants selected to receive funding from the National Competition are new subapplicants.
  - Each grant cycle since Fiscal Year 2020, FEMA has seen an upward trend of meeting and exceeding its Justice40 goal in both overall funding and competitive funding.

## BRIC Direct Technical Assistance Selections

- FEMA is leading the emergency management community by prioritizing benefits to historically underserved communities. The agency remains committed to supporting communities as they build capability and capacity throughout the grant process.
- For fiscal year 2023, FEMA is selecting 93 communities and Tribal Nations across all 10 FEMA Regions to receive assistance. Of the 93, 23 are Tribal Nations, three are territories and 67 are communities. This will bring the total number of communities and Tribal Nations receiving assistance to 167.
- Three territories and 11 states have communities that will be selected to receive BRIC Direct Technical Assistance for the first time.
  - Territories include: territories comprise: American Samoa, U.S. Virgin Islands, Northern Mariana Island
  - Communities in 11 states include: Connecticut, Delaware, Indiana, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Utah, Washington, West Virginia
- Overall, 91% of selected communities and Tribal Nations (86 of 94) have one or more indicator of equity – meaning 1% or more of U.S. Census tracts are designated as a [Community Disaster Resilience Zone](#), or are disadvantaged jurisdictions according to the [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, or an Economically Disadvantaged Rural Community](#).
- The 9% without an equity indicator (8 of 94 of the selections) consist of U.S. territories and communities with less than 3,000 people and do not meet the income threshold to classify as an Economically Disadvantaged Rural Community.

**Table 1: Overview of Justice40 and the Percentages of Communities Benefitting by Fiscal Year**

	<b>Total Funding Benefitting Justice40 Communities</b>	<b>Competitive Funding Benefitting Justice40 Communities</b>
Fiscal Year 2020	41%	40%
Fiscal Year 2021	47%	49%
Fiscal Year 2022	51%	52%
Fiscal Year 2023	67%	70%

## Nature-Based Solutions

Nature-based solutions are sustainable planning, design, environmental management, and engineering practices that weave natural features or processes into the built environment to promote adaptation and resilience.

- These solutions use natural features and processes to combat climate change, reduce flood risk, improve water quality, protect coastal property, restore and protect wetlands, stabilize shorelines, reduce urban heat, and add recreational space. For this grant cycle, 57% of the National Competition selected projects incorporate nature-based solutions from 16 applicants and nine FEMA regions.
- 84% of those nature-based solution projects were Economically Disadvantaged Rural Communities, Community Disaster Resilience Zones or disadvantaged communities.