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FEMA's New Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Program

BRIC is FEMA's new mitigation grant program, replacing the Agency's prior pre-disaster mitigation (PDM) grant program. BRIC is the result of the federal Disaster Recovery Reform Act (DRRA), which was enacted in 2018. The DRRA amended PDM to allow funds to be used for building code activities and to require code adoption and implementation be considerations in evaluating competitive grant proposals. Like PDM, BRIC provides funding by formula to state, tribal, and territorial (STT) governments with remaining funds to be provided through a national competition. STT governments are BRIC "applicants," while local governments are "subapplicants," meaning they need to apply to the state for funds.

This year (FY2020), \$500M is available, including \$33.6M allocated to states and territories by formula (up to \$600,000 per applicant), with \$20M set aside for tribal governments. \$446.4M is available for competitive grants. The nonfederal cost share is generally 25% (10% in small/impooverished communities). FEMA has identified "increase[ing] funding to Applicants that facilitate the adoption and enforcement of the latest published editions of building codes" as one of the four priorities for the program this year. The application period opens September 30 and closes January 29, 2021. FEMA's [fact sheet](#) and the [FY20 Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) have additional info.

BRIC Building Code Activities

FEMA describes code projects as "Low-Cost, High Impact Hazard Mitigation." They must be paid for out of STT funding allocations as "Capability- and Capacity-Building (C&CB)" activities. Eligible activities are detailed in [this backgrounder on codes](#). Funding can be used:

- To "Purchase publications, or obtain digital license or printing permissions of publications, to support building code activities."
- To evaluate new codes for adoption, including "staff time or external labor [consultants](#) necessary for evaluations and expenses for code review committees."
- For code official training and certification. FEMA's [materials](#) link to ICC's website for training/certification resources. ICC's *When Disaster Strikes Institute* is specifically mentioned.
- For "electronic permitting, online model code access, virtual inspection technology, and remote building codes administration."
- To "Cover costs associated with [building department accreditation](#)."

Building Code Considerations for Competitive Grant Projects

All competitive grants are reviewed on technical criteria. Out of 100 total available points, applicants earn 20 points if they require the 2015/2018 IBC and IRC and an additional 15 points if the subapplicant has a Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS) rating of 1 to 5. Funded mitigation projects must also "at a minimum, be in conformance with the latest published editions (meaning either of the two most recently published editions) of relevant consensus-based codes, specifications and standards that incorporate the latest hazard-resistant designs." Acquisition projects must demonstrate to FEMA how they will resettle such areas in a way that mitigates future risk from natural hazards through mechanisms "such as new land use development plans, building codes or construction requirements, protective infrastructure development, or restrictions on future disaster assistance to such properties."