

# Fire Prevention and Safety Grant Program: FP&S Activity Frequently Asked Questions

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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.

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## 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 the following 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)?

FP&S Grant Program projects that involve the installation of supplies/equipment not specifically excluded from a FEMA EHP Review, per the Grant Programs Directorate Programmatic Environmental Assessment, such as ground-disturbing activities, or modification/renovation of existing buildings or structures, will require an EHP review. Some equipment activities will require an EHP review as well. Such activities 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

Please see FEMA's EHP Screening form and instructions at [EHP Screening Form](#). EHP policy guidance can be found at [Environmental & Historic Preservation Guidance for FEMA Grant Applications | 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 Indian 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](#), 1-800-323-8603, or by fax at 202-254-4297.

## 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.

- **Firefighter Safety 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;
- Database System Development;
- Preliminary Studies; and
- Early Career Investigator.

All applicants are subject to a 5% cost share.

## 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.

## **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 *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023* (Pub. L. No. 117-328) appropriated a total of \$36 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.

National Strategic Projects are identified by the Criteria Development Panel (CDP), a panel of fire service professionals representing the nine major fire service organizations. Under the FP&S Grant Program, the CDP has recommended that approximately \$2 million is set aside to fund projects that directly advance the [National Strategy culminating from the U.S. Fire Administrator Working Groups](#). One to three awards are expected (but not required), each in the amount of \$300,000 to \$1,000,000.

## **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 GO 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 regarding matching or cost-sharing. Applicants who are under consideration for award and plan to use in-kind as their method for cost sharing will be asked to submit their plan for documenting and verifying in-kind contributions prior to award. Please see 2 C.F.R. § 200.306, as applicable, for further guidance regarding cost matching.

## 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 who submit system-related issues to FEMA GO before 3 p.m. ET on Friday, April 12, 2024 will have their issue addressed. 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 Programs 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 between the hours of 8 a.m. – 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 prior to 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 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 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](mailto: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 at the beginning of summer and on a continuous basis thereafter 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 and must accept their awards no later than 30 calendar 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?**

Applicants required to have a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement that desire to charge indirect costs to an award must provide a copy of their negotiated indirect cost rate agreement at the time of application. Applicants that are not required by 2 C.F.R. Part 200 to have a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement but are required by 2 C.F.R. Part 200 to develop an indirect cost rate proposal must provide a copy of their proposal at the time of application. 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](mailto: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. Post-award requests to charge indirect costs will be considered on a case-by-case basis and based upon the submission of an agreement or proposal as discussed above or based upon on the de minimis rate or cost allocation plan, as applicable.

## **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 10% 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 calendar 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 \$5,000 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 must 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 \$5,000.

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 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 National Strategic Projects?

National Strategic Projects are identified by the Criteria Development Panel (CDP), a panel of fire service professionals representing the nine major fire service organizations. Under the FP&S Grant Program, the CDP has recommended that approximately \$2 million is set aside to fund projects that directly advance the [National Strategy culminating from the U.S. Fire Administrator Working Groups](#).

Projects are expected to be implemented over a 12-month period of performance. One to three awards are expected (but not required), each in the amount of \$300,000 to \$1,000,000.

## 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 the BABAA.