

EDA FY18 DISASTER SUPPLEMENTAL NOFO

Frequently Asked Questions



This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document has been prepared to complement the Economic Development Administration’s (EDA) *FY 2018 EDA Disaster Supplemental Notice of Funding Opportunity* (FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO) published on April 10, 2018. Interested applicants are encouraged to refer to both the [NOFO](#) and this FAQ for detailed information regarding Disaster Supplemental funding, such as applicant eligibility, eligible activities, and application preparation and submission requirements. However, in the event of any conflict between the NOFO and the FAQs, the NOFO will control.

The questions and answers summarized in this document are organized by general topic area. Please refer to the table of contents, below.

NOTE: *This FAQ may be updated from time to time as new, additional questions are received. Please refer to the EDA Disaster Recovery home page (<https://www.eda.gov/programs/disaster-recovery/>) for FAQ updates and other important program information.*

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A. Disaster Supplemental Funding Availability

1. How much Disaster Supplemental FY18 funding is available for grants?

Subject to the availability of funds, EDA has approximately \$587 million in FY18 supplemental appropriations available for disaster recovery grants (see Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, P.L. 115-123). Publication of these FAQs does not obligate the Department of Commerce (DOC) or EDA to award any specific grant or cooperative agreement or to obligate all or any part of available funds.

2. How much money will be available to each region for grant making?

Applying a number of factors, including impact and distress, EDA has allocated the \$587 million in disaster supplemental program funds among the six Regional Offices as follows:

| EDA REGIONAL OFFICE | DISASTER SUPPLEMENTAL ALLOCATION |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Atlanta / ATRO | \$147,362,000 |
| Austin / AURO | \$129,119,000 |
| Chicago / CRO | \$8,005,000 |
| Denver / DRO | \$17,435,000 |
| Philadelphia / PRO | \$191,269,000 |
| Seattle / SRO | \$93,810,000 |

NOTE: EDA may exercise its discretion to adjust the allocations to the Regional Offices based on its experience in administering disaster supplemental appropriations to ensure funds are used to maximum effect, or to adjust to unforeseen changes in recovery efforts.

B. Disaster Supplemental Eligibility Criteria

1. Where can Disaster Supplemental projects be located?

Applicants must propose a project located in or serving one or more communities or regions impacted by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, or Maria, or wildfires or other Federally-declared natural disasters occurring in calendar year 2017. Please see Section C.2 of the [FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO](#), “Eligible Counties Based on Disaster Declarations.” Construction projects and activities (including design and engineering) must be located within an eligible county. The scope of work for non-construction projects and activities must primarily benefit eligible counties and stakeholders representing those eligible counties must be directly engaged in the project.¹ The applicant does not need to be located in the affected county; however, the applicant does need to demonstrate how the proposed project will benefit the disaster affected community or region. For more information on the location of Federally-declared disasters in 2017, applicants are invited to consult the FEMA website, <https://www.fema.gov/disasters>. (See question 2 below for more detail on using the FEMA website).

¹ See also 13 C.F.R. § 301.3(a).

2. How do I use the FEMA website to determine if my project is a county that has received a major disaster declaration in calendar year 2017?

It is advisable to use the FEMA website at <https://www.fema.gov/disasters> to confirm that your county has received a major disaster declaration, since the counties included in a major disaster declaration may be updated or changed by FEMA, after an initial declaration is made. You can visit the [FEMA major disaster locator](#) webpage and follow these steps:

1. Select “Major Disaster Declaration”
2. Select 2017 for “Incident begins” date, and 2017 “Incident ends” date. You do not need to enter the month.
3. Select the State in which your proposed project will be located.
4. Click “Apply”. This will bring you to a list of major disasters that were declared in that State during 2017.
5. Select the disaster that impacted the community where the proposed project will be located.
6. This will bring you to a map showing the counties that are included in that major disaster declaration.
7. Counties that are shaded (any color or pattern) have received a major disaster declaration.

3. What activities are eligible for Disaster Supplemental funding?

EAA funds can be awarded to assist a wide variety of activities related to disaster recovery focused on economic development, including economic recovery strategic planning grants, and construction assistance. It is a flexible resource that responds adaptively to pressing economic issues and is well-suited to help address challenges faced by regions recovering from natural disasters. Through this program, EDA can support both the development of disaster recovery strategies and the implementation of recovery projects identified with those strategies, including construction activities, capitalizing revolving loan funds (RLFs), and a variety of others.

Disaster recovery project activities that can be eligible for Disaster Supplemental grants include, but are not limited to, economic development projects that:

- Support the creation of new businesses and jobs in a variety of industry sectors, including, but not limited to advanced manufacturing, agriculture, energy, information technology, health care, telecommunications, tourism and recreation, transportation, and cultural and natural assets.
- Implement local and regional job creation and growth and economic diversification strategies targeted towards affected workers and businesses.
- Resiliency projects to increase the ability of a community or region to anticipate, withstand, and bounce back from future economic injuries and disasters. This may include: ensuring redundancy in telecommunications and broadband networks; promoting business continuity and preparedness; industrial diversification; employing safe development practices in business districts and surrounding communities; conducting disaster recovery planning with key stakeholders; and other methods that strengthen local

and regional capacity to troubleshoot and address vulnerabilities within the regional economy.

- Construction activities, including the restoration of damaged infrastructure, infrastructure enhancement, building new infrastructure including high performance and resilient infrastructure.
- Strengthening or developing existing or emerging industry clusters.²
- Developing business incubator programs.
- Enhancing access to and use of broadband services to support job growth through business creation and expansion.
- The development of economic development diversification strategies in accordance with EDA CEDS recommendations.³
- Facilitating access to private capital investment and providing related capacity building and technical assistance, such as effective utilization of capital investment for business development and job creation.
- Facilitating and promoting market access for goods and services created and manufactured by businesses in the impacted community/region.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the appropriate EDA Regional Office Disaster Point of Contact (Disaster POC) for specific guidance pertaining to the eligible use of EDA disaster supplement funds. See Section G. (“Federal Awarding Agency Contacts”) of the [FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO](#) or refer to EDA Regional Office Contact Information available on the EDA web site: www.eda.gov/contact.

4. What entities are eligible to apply for a Disaster Supplemental grant?

EDA will accept grant applications from eligible applicants, as described below. If an application is submitted by a group of co-applicants, each co-applicant must individually meet EDA eligible applicant criteria. Further, the application should include information that clearly specifies how the co-applicants will work together and which portions of the scope of work each co-applicant is responsible to manage.

Eligible Applicants

- 1. District Organization;**
- 2. Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes;**
- 3. State, county, city, or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions;**

² Industry clusters are networks of interconnected firms and supporting institutions in a common geographic region. Clusters also are generally defined by and benefit from shared labor pools, infrastructure and markets.

³ CEDS Content Guidelines: <https://www.eda.gov/ceds/>

Eligible Applicants

- 4. Institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education;**
- 5. Public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a State.**

5. My organization recently received a grant from EDA; will this affect our eligibility and/or general competitiveness for a Disaster Supplemental grant?

No; any current or past recipient of an EDA award is eligible to apply under this competition. See also Section E.2.c (“Grants Officer’s Decision”) of the [FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO](#) regarding past performance under previous Federal financial assistance awards serving as a selection factor for the Grants Officer.

6. Can Disaster Supplemental awards be used to finance construction activities?

Yes, construction activities are eligible for Disaster Supplemental funding and may be awarded by EDA. In EDA’s experience with post-disaster recovery, the most effective rebuilding efforts are based on long-term regional economic development or redevelopment strategies. For this reason, EDA encourages the submission of applications based on long-term, regionally oriented, coordinated and collaborative economic development or redevelopment strategies that foster economic growth and resilience. EDA will regard applications that are substantively supported by such strategies as more competitive, while applications for rebuilding damaged infrastructure that are not demonstrably supported by or otherwise related to a long-term plan for economic development will not be considered competitive.

7. What is Disaster Nexus?

An applicant must include a standalone narrative attachment, not to exceed one page, describing the nexus between the proposed project and disaster recovery and resiliency. The narrative should consider the consequences of the relevant disaster and how the intended project outcome fulfills the community’s post-disaster recovery needs. Failure to submit this narrative or to demonstrate any such nexus will result in the proposal or application not being considered for funding.

8. What are CEDS equivalent documents?

Except for strategy grants, the applicant must demonstrate alignment of its project with the region’s economic objectives as stated in the region’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) or CEDS equivalent EDA accepted economic development strategy ([NOFO](#), Section E, pages 24-25). Documents for consideration can include various regional economic development plans (or a combination of plans), including but not limited to: regional comprehensive plans, regional resilience plans, adaptation or hazard mitigation plans, and Long-Term Recovery Support Strategies prepared by EDA in select FEMA Disaster Location such as Florida, Texas, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. See 13 C.F.R. § 303.7 (outlines threshold legal requirements for CEDS and agency consideration of CEDS-equivalents).

9. If we are receiving HUD CDBG-DR funds or funding from FEMA, USDA or SBA, could we also apply for EDA funding?

EDA funding cannot duplicate funding available from federal, state or local governments, private or non-profit organizations. EDA will not pay for costs that are funded by other sources. However, under certain circumstances federal funds such as HUD CDBG-DR funds can be used as match for EDA projects. See 13 C.F.R. § 300.3 (definition of “Local Share or Matching Share”).

C. Disaster Supplemental Application Procedures: Proposals and Complete Applications

1. What are the steps I need to follow to apply for a Disaster Supplemental grant?

All requests for Disaster Supplemental assistance are subject to the agency’s standard two-phase review process.

NOTE: While an applicant may submit a proposal package as outlined in Section D.2.a. of the NOFO, for expediency, an applicant may instead submit a complete application as outlined in Section D.2.b of the NOFO either in lieu of or concurrent with a proposal. The submission will still proceed through EDA’s two-phase review process described below. For additional guidance, applicants are encouraged to contact the appropriate Disaster POC. See Section G. (“Federal Awarding Agency Contacts”) of the [FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO](#) or refer to EDA Regional Office Contact Information available on the EDA web site: www.eda.gov/contact.

Phase 1, Project Proposal

Applicants may first submit a project proposal for review and consideration by a Proposal Review Committee (PRC) in the appropriate Regional Office. Please refer to Section D.2.a. of the [FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO](#) regarding what forms are required for a complete proposal. Complete proposals will be reviewed in accordance with responsiveness criteria described in Section E.1. of the [NOFO](#).

Applicants whose proposals are deemed by EDA to be responsive to the FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO will be asked to submit a complete application and will proceed under Phase 2, as described directly below.

Please note that if EDA determines that a proposal is “Responsive” to the NOFO and requests that an applicant submit a complete application, EDA is not obligated and cannot guarantee that the relevant project will ultimately receive funding in whole or in part. EDA receives far more applications than it can fund.

Phase 2, Complete Project Application

Please refer to Section D.2.b. of the [FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO](#) regarding the forms that are required for a complete application. Complete applications will be reviewed and evaluated by a Regional Investment Review Committee (IRC) in accordance with the merit review criteria as

described in Section E.2. of the [NOFO](#). Those complete applications recommended for funding by the IRC and fully compliant with applicable rules and regulations will be forwarded to the Grants Officer for a final decision on funding.

2. Submission Options

NOTE: EDA strongly encourages applicants to submit their proposals and any subsequent applications electronically via Grants.gov (www.grants.gov). However, EDA will also accept hard copy (paper) submissions if these are mailed according to the following guidance as provided under the FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO.

Applicants have the following options for the submission of both project proposals and any complete applications:

- **Electronic Submissions**
 - Applicants can locate the funding opportunity on Grants.gov (www.grants.gov) using Funding Opportunity Number “EDA-2018-DISASTER.”
 - All components of the project proposal and application packages are identical to those required under EDAP, and may be accessed and downloaded (in a screen-fillable format) at: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>.
 - The preferred electronic file format for attachments is Adobe portable document format (PDF); however, EDA will accept electronic files in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, or Microsoft Excel.

- **Hard Copy Submissions:**
 - Applicants that choose to submit hard copies of their complete Disaster Supplemental project proposals and any subsequent complete applications must include **one original and two copies** of the complete application package (including **all required signatures**, as applicable) must be received by the applicable Regional Office.
 - DOC mail security measures may delay receipt of United States Postal Service mail for up to two weeks. Therefore, applicants that submit paper submissions are advised to use guaranteed delivery services.
 - Complete information describing the requirements pertaining to the hard copy submission of proposals and complete applications is found under Section D.4.a.ii (“Paper Submissions”) of the [FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO](#).
 - Applicants may obtain the FY18 Disaster Supplemental application package electronically at Grants.gov (www.grants.gov) using Funding Opportunity Number “**EDA-2018-DISASTER**.”
 - Eligible applicants may also request a paper/hard copy of both a proposal package and a complete application package by contacting their state Economic Development Representative (EDR). See Section G. (“Federal Awarding Agency Contacts”) of the [FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO](#), or refer to EDA Regional Office Contact Information available on the EDA web site: www.eda.gov/contact to identify the applicant’s EDA Regional Office.

4. How will we know that our proposal or application has been received? Will we be able to check the status of our proposal?

Electronic Submissions: Upon the applicant’s successful submission of a complete proposal or application, www.grants.gov will generate a confirmation page with a project proposal number. Applicants can use this number to check the status of their proposal or application.

Hard Copy Submissions: EDA strongly encourages applicants who submit hard copies of their Disaster Supplemental proposals and/or full applications to transmit these packages via any delivery company that provides tracking information, including:

- United States Post Office Certified Mail (<https://www.usps.com/ship/insurance-extra-services.htm>)
- United Parcel Service (https://www.ups.com/WebTracking/track?loc=en_us)
- Federal Express (<https://www.fedex.com/apps/fedextrack/?action=track>)
- DHL (<http://www.dhl-usa.com/en.html>)

In addition, EDA also strongly encourages applicants to contact the appropriate Disaster POC to confirm the applicant’s hard copy submission has been received and to subsequently obtain the status of their proposal/application. See Section G. (“Federal Awarding Agency Contacts”) of the [FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO](#), or refer to EDA Regional Office Contact Information available on the EDA web site: www.eda.gov/contact.

5. What should applicants do if they have questions as they prepare their Disaster Supplemental proposals and applications?

Applicants are encouraged to contact the appropriate Disaster POC with any questions or requests for technical guidance pertaining to proposal and application requirements. See Section G. (“Federal Awarding Agency Contacts”) of the [FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO](#), or refer to EDA Regional Office Contact Information available on the EDA web site: www.eda.gov/contact.

6. Are costs directly associated with preparing a Disaster Supplemental grant proposal and/or complete application eligible for reimbursement?

No, direct costs associated with the preparation of a Disaster Supplemental proposal and/or complete application are not eligible for reimbursement.

7. What are the submission deadlines for Disaster Supplemental proposals and applications?

Disaster Supplemental proposals and applications will be accepted and reviewed by EDA on an ongoing basis until the publication of a new Disaster Supplemental NOFO, cancellation of the current NOFO or all available funds have been expended.

8. What if we need to edit our proposal after it has been submitted?

Applicants that wish to reopen a project proposal submission are instructed to please contact the appropriate Disaster POC. See Section G. (“Federal Awarding Agency Contacts”) of the [FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO](#), or refer to EDA Regional Office Contact Information available on the EDA web site: www.eda.gov/contact.

9. Does my proposal (as opposed to my full application) need to include letters of support or letters demonstrating matching funds?

No, applicants are not required to include these types of letters as part of the proposal submission package. However, applicants that are asked to submit a complete Disaster Supplemental application must include any required support letters, along with other documentation (e.g., match commitment letters) as specified under the [FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO](#).

10. What are the matching fund requirements for Disaster Supplemental projects?

Most Disaster Supplemental grants will be required to provide matching fund support, either cash or in-kind. Once applicant and area eligibility are established, generally EDA's maximum allowable grant rate is 50% of approved project cost. Higher levels of economic distress in terms of per capita income (PCI) or unemployment may result in a higher maximum allowable grant rate. In any event with documented economic distress and/or adequate justification, per EDA requirements, EDA may agree to a higher maximum up to 80%. For these awards, EDA does have the authority to increase the investment rate up to a maximum of 100%. In determining whether to increase the Federal share above 80%, EDA will consider on a case-by-case basis whether the circumstances of the proposed project warrant a Federal share in excess of 80%, including whether the applicant has exhausted its effective taxing or borrowing capacity or meets other thresholds for elevated need. Additionally, EDA may establish a maximum investment rate of up to 100 percent for projects of Indian Tribes.

Match requirements are outlined in Section C.3. in the FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO.

11. We have already submitted an Economic Development Assistance programs (EDAP) application to our EDA Regional Office. Is it possible for our application to be considered for Disaster Supplemental funding instead?

It may be possible that this outcome can be accommodated; however, given that the Disaster funding application requirements are much more focused and specific than for standard EDAP submissions, the Applicant may need to amend and/or resubmit their proposal and application. If your organization has already submitted an EDAP application to your EDA Regional Office, and you would now prefer for your project to be considered for Disaster Supplemental funding, your organization is advised to immediately contact the appropriate Disaster POC to initiate this discussion. See Section G. ("Federal Awarding Agency Contacts") of the [FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO](#), or refer to EDA Regional Office Contact Information available on the EDA web site: www.eda.gov/contact.

D. Disaster Supplemental Application Selection and Award

1. How will applicants be notified of the Proposal Review Committee's (PRC) determination regarding their proposal. How will final award notices be made?

Applicants will be notified in writing within 30 days of receipt of their complete proposal (or combined proposal/application package) of the PRC's determination regarding their proposal.

If the PRC determines that a proposal is “Responsive” to the NOFO, the applicant will be asked to submit a complete application to EDA for further evaluation. See Section E., “Phase I: Proposal Review” of the [FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO](#) for further information.

If an application is selected for funding, the EDA Grants Officer will issue the grant award (Form CD-450), which is the authorizing financial assistance award document, along with all appropriate additional forms and documents. See Section F.2.b of the NOFO for a list of these forms and documents.

EDA will provide Form CD-450 via the award package to the AOR listed on the applicant’s Form SF-424. The applicant must sign and return the Form CD-450 without modification within 30 days of the date of EDA’s signature on the form.

EDA will notify unsuccessful applicants in writing to the AOR listed on the applicant’s Form SF-424. EDA will retain unsuccessful applications in accordance with EDA’s record retention schedule.

2. How will EDA evaluate Disaster Supplemental proposal and application submissions?

Program staff from EDA will review Disaster Supplemental project proposal and application submissions according to the criteria outlined under Section E. (“Proposal and Application Review Process”) of the [FY18 Disaster Supplemental NOFO](#).

NOTE: Disaster Supplemental proposals and applications will be evaluated as a separate and discrete subset of all EDAP submissions that are received by EDA’s Regional Offices, and will not otherwise compete with non-Disaster Supplemental EDAP proposals and applications for consideration and selection for award.