

NEHRP Comprehensive Cooperative Agreement Webinar
3/14/2019, 2:30pm-4:00pm EST

Attendees

- **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) HQ**
 - David Javier, Jon Foster, Mike Tong
- **FEMA Region and State Participants**

Anne Fuchs (Maine)	Hilda Booth & Danna Weaver (Arkansas)
Sherry O’Toole & Sarah White (Massachusetts)	Wendy Blackwell & Andy Jochems (New Mexico)
Marjorie Gale (Vermont)	Bonnie McKelvey (Oklahoma)
Dan O’Brien (New York)	Jeff Briggs & Amy Lepper (Missouri)
Denise Lewis (USVI)	Matt Morgan (Colorado)
LaTonya Stephens, Reginald Marshall, Natasha Jackson (Alabama)	Melinda Gibson (Wyoming)
Ginger Martin (Georgia)	Mulivanu Aiumu (American Samoa)
Heather Bullock & John Cox (Mississippi)	Michael Conway (Arizona)
Kevin Kalbaugh, Lisa Patton, Katie Webster (N. Carolina)	Kevin Miller, Sharon Blankeheim (California)
David Perry (S. Carolina)	Leo Espia (Guam)
Adam Stewart (Tennessee)	Janell Woodward (Nevada)
Jason Williams (Illinois)	Susan Cleverley (Idaho)
Allison Curry (Indiana)	Althea Rizzo (Oregon)
Heather Byers (Ohio)	Brian Terbush (Washington)

- **Earthquake Consortia and Partners**
 - Pascal Schuback (CREW), Jim Wilkinson (CUSEC), Ed Fratto (NESEC), Matthew Wall (WSSPC), Bernadette Hadnagy (ATC), Maggie Ortiz- Millan (EERI), Heidi Tremayne (EERI), Leslie Chapman Henderson (FLASH), Eric Vaughn (FLASH), Mark Benthien (SCEC), Casey Thayer (PMTS), Christina Zagara (PMTS), Darius Zagara (PMTS)
- **FEMA Regional Earthquake Program Managers**

- R1: Paul Morey
- R2: Jose Lebron
- R4: Noriko Kibble
- R5: Scott Bailey
- R6: Bart Moore
- R7: Cheickh Koma,
- R8: Sean McGowan
- R9: Anne Rosinski

- **Additional Participants**

- JiQui Yuan, Lorrie Pahl, Florecita P. Brunn, Ines Pearce, B. Heidbreder

Meeting Goal:

- To discuss frequently asked questions (FAQs) regarding the two separate grant program funding opportunities and the changes to our grant program as a result of the recent Reauthorization of the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP).

Opening:

- Jon Foster opened the webinar by introducing himself and David Javier. On behalf of FEMA Acting Administrator Pete Gaynor and all the members of the FEMA NEHRP Team, he thanked everyone for their past, present and future support of our national efforts to reduce earthquake risk in the United States and the Territories of the United States.

Presentation's Outline:

- After taking roll, Jon elaborated on what would be discussed over the webinar's course.
 - The enhancements to the Grant Program because of the recent reauthorization of the NEHRP
 - The FAQs HQ and our Regional Earthquake Program Managers receive the two separate funding opportunities:
 - Earthquake Direct State Assistance (EDSA)
 - Earthquake Consortia and Partner Support (ECPS)
 - Jon also noted that a letter was sent out by the Assistant Administrator of Risk Management, Mike Grimm, to all State Directors of Emergency Management on 3/12/19, and that message was followed up on the next day by the Grant Program Confirmation Request. They should be aware that these communications have gone out and are with your State Emergency Management Directors. They should've, if not already have contacted you about the changes to the program.
 - Questions and Answers

National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program Reauthorization Act of 2018:

- There have been some significant enhancements to NEHRP since the last annual call. On December 11th, 2018, the President signed into law the "National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program Reauthorization Act of 2018," which reauthorizes NEHRP. The new legislation mandates several enhancements to the administration of the FEMA NEHRP State Assistance grant program.

FAQs:

- Now addressing the questions:
- The basic difference between the two separate FEMA NEHRP State Assistance grant program funding opportunities is:
 - Earthquake Direct State Assistance: Provides Federal funding directly to states and territories that have a Moderate to Very High earthquake risk. Funding is provided using Cooperative Agreements. These states and territories are

responsible for the development, management, and implementation of the activities. Thirteen states participated in 2018.

- Earthquake Consortia and Partner Support: Provides Federal funding to specific regional Earthquake Consortia and Partners that possess the critical skills necessary to develop and implement regional (multi-state) and/or national earthquake risk mitigation activities. The Great Shakeout is an example of this. Twenty-one states participated in 2018.
- The critical dates associated with the FEMA NEHRP State grant program?
 - March 4: Notices of Funding Opportunities for the FY 2019 Earthquake Direct State Assistance (EDSA) and the Earthquake Consortia and Partner Support (ECPS) grants were submitted to FEMA’s Grant Programs Directorate (GPD) for review and approval.
 - April 1: Return of Grant Program Participation Confirmation Request.
 - April 12: Return of draft Base Work Plans from Consortia and Partners due.
 - You should’ve received an email from David this morning.
 - May 1: Notice of Funding Opportunity for Earthquake Direct State Assistance posted to grants.gov. Deadline 5/30/19 at 11:59 pm EDT.
 - May 1: Notice of Funding Opportunity for Earthquake Consortia and Partner Support posted on grants.gov. Deadline 5/30/19 11:59 pm EDT.
 - July 1: Earthquake Direct State Assistance Awards made.
 - July 1: Earthquake Consortia and Partner Support Awards made.
- These dates are program dates and may be subject to change. The plan is to publish the NOFOs in May, which will be open for 30 days. Don’t forget that responses to the NOFOs are due at 11:59 pm Eastern the night before.
- FEMA is putting a lot more emphasis on Performance Progress Reports. In the past FEMA has been flexible with the Cooperative Agreements quarterly Performance Progress Reports but the agency is putting much more emphasis on the timely submission of these reports. There will be greater emphasis this year with making sure these reports are getting in on time.
- If some of the due dates fall on a weekend, some dates don’t fall on business days, but the program is required to allow a certain number of days, which determined the final due date. The Federal calendar system is based on calendar days so sometimes it ends up on weekend.
- The “Allowable” Activities in the 2019 NOFO (activities to be implemented in FY 2020) are detailed in the Grant Participation Confirmation Request and NOFO. There are now seven (7) Allowable Activities:
 - Development of seismic mitigation plans
 - Preparing inventories and conducting seismic safety inspections of critical structures
 - Updating building codes, zoning codes, and ordinances to enhance seismic safety
 - Increasing earthquake awareness and education
 - Encouraging the development of multi-state groups that support local earthquake safety and the other eligible program activities
 - Participation in emergency management exercises that substantially benefit earthquake mitigation efforts.

- Promotion of Earthquake Insurance (new allowable activity this year). This new allowable activity was incorporated to assist in achieving FIMA Strategic Objective 1.2 (Close the Insurance Gap). Here is the description in the NOFO: States and territories may use FEMA NEHRP State Assistance grant funding for education, awareness and outreach activities that promote the purchase of Earthquake Insurance by property owners. Materials and communications developed using State Assistance funding cannot promote or create the appearance of promoting a specific vendor or insurance company.

Earthquake Direct State Assistance (EDSA) funding opportunity:

- David Javier elaborated on the most frequent questions regarding EDSA.
- What changes occurred to the Direct State Assistance funding opportunity with the new legislation?
 - The most significant change is the elimination of the graduated “hard” cash match requirement, which is contained in CFR 44, Section 361. The new legislation brings the FEMA NEHRP State Assistance grant program in line with our other Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grants, in that it now only requires the State to provide a 25% cost share per IAW P.L. 115-307, Section 2.
- Does the new legislation affect the 50% “Cash Match” and State Governor’s Certification of Match Capability?
 - Yes. The 50% “Cash Match” requirement was eliminated along with the State Governor’s Certification of Match Capability.
- Does the new legislation affect the use of “third-party, in-kind” contributions?
 - Yes. The prohibition on the use of “third-party, in-kind” contributions to meet the 25% non-Federal cost share has been eliminated. IAW P.L. 115-307, Section 2, States are now permitted to use third-party, in-kind contributions as defined by 2 CFR, Part 200, Section 200.96.
- Sub-awards or sub-contracts
 - For the purposes of our program, Sub-awards are considered sub-contracts and are authorized. For example, it would be fine for the state to subcontract with their Regional Consortia to implement and manage the activity.
- What will the Period of Performance (PoP) be for the NEHRP Grant Programs?
 - Earthquake Direct State Assistance NOFO PoP will be 12 months. It will be 12-18 months for Earthquake Consortia and Partner Support.
- What if states prefer not to participate in the Earthquake Direct State Assistance grant program?
 - These states will continue to receive FEMA support through national-level earthquake activities developed and managed by FEMA-supported Consortia and Partners. NETAP Training, technical assistance, and the annual Great ShakeOut event are examples of these activities.
 - Funding for states that elect to not participate will be reallocated to the remaining states. In the past, money was going to the State Support component, NETAP, for Shakeout, etc. The language in the Letters that were sent to the State Directors of

Emergency Management says that we are not decreasing the amount of State Assistance funding. The greatest funding goes to states with the greatest risks.

- By concentrating our efforts and resources on those States with the greatest risk, we stand the greatest chance of protecting lives and property with risks associated with earthquakes.
- Who will be “administering” the Earthquake Direct State Assistance NOFOs?
 - FEMA Regional Earthquake Program Manager’s will administer these awards. Using our Cooperative Agreements means that Regional Earthquake Program Managers can work with the States as they develop their application and work plans for the NOFO.

Earthquake Consortia and Partner Support (ECPS) funding opportunity:

- Although already having addressed Earthquake Consortia and Partner Support NOFO dates, Jon wanted to address some of the questions we’ve received over the past year regarding ECPS.
- What changes occurred to the Consortia and Partner Support funding opportunity with the new legislation?
 - The only significant change is the elimination of the requirement for Consortia to develop and manage individual State Support projects. With the implementation of P.L. 115-307, individual States participating in the FEMA NEHRP State Assistance grant program will not have to meet the previous 50% Cash Match requirement. Therefore, FEMA has eliminated the State Support component of the program. All individual eligible States will have the opportunity to apply for the Earthquake Direct State Assistance NOFO.
 - It is clear that the intention of the recent legislation was to simplify the FEMA NEHRP State Assistance grant program by mandating the same participation requirements as all other FEMA Non-Disaster grant programs. Eliminating the State Support component of the program not only advances that legislative intent, it furthers our national goal of reducing earthquake risk and the complexity of the program.
 - Another enhancement to the program is that in future years, FEMA will pay for state attendance at national meetings, beginning at the National Earthquake Conference (NEC) 2020. FEMA will pay for attendance so that they don’t have to use limited grant funding to attend meetings. We want to encourage them to be there.
- Will “Extensions” to the period of performance be authorized?
 - Requests for Extension will be determined on a case by case bases. Please see Section H of the NOFO for more information.
- Who will be “administering” the Earthquake Consortia and Partner Support NOFOs?
 - FEMA Headquarters Program Managers will administer these NOFOs. David and I will work the Consortia and Partners as they develop their application and work plans for the NOFO.

Questions and Answers: David conducted the Question and Answer session from attendees on the phone.

- **Wendy Blackwell:** Do the current Period of Performance dates allow for us to request funding for the 2020 national meeting now? Will travel to the annual meeting be automatically awarded through consortium or direct to the State?
 - **Answer:** One of the enhancements we made to the program is that we won't require states to pay their way to national meetings. Funding will be provided for all eligible states that are within a consortia's region. Consortia partners will probably use the same methodology they used in the past to arrange your travel.

- **Melinda Gibson:** It sounds like states that do not elect to participate in direct state assistance basically forfeit the funding and the funding will then go to other states and/or to consortia to use as they choose to reduce earthquake risk. Is this an accurate description of the grant guidance as it stands today?
 - **Answer:** Close. We're not going to take any of the initial allocation for support. We'll re-allocate amongst the remaining states and keep that amount the same. We're still going to provide support to our consortia and EQ partners. States will still benefit from funding provided to them even if they don't get direct funding. Shakeout is an example of a national level project that will benefit states that don't participate.

- **Sharon Blankenheim:** Confirming that the State Programmatic Confirmation requests have not gone out. Will they still be due on 4/1/19? Also, if the awards are scheduled for 7/1/19, what will the performance period be?
 - **Answer:** They went out yesterday. Period of performance starts 10/1/19.

- **Heather Byers:** It was discussed that eligible states will have their travel paid for to the National Meetings, what makes a state eligible?
 - **Answer:** If they are one of the 36 states and territories that are already eligible for the program. That list is an attachment to the program participation confirmation request.

- **David Perry:** What did you say the deadline was to submit project proposals to the FEMA Region?
 - **Answer:** That deadline has not yet been set. It will be contained in the NOFO posted on May 1.

- **Ginger Martin:** I have a question regarding how often you can apply for the grant I was told from someone that it's only every 5 years
 - **Answer:** It's once a year.

- **Ginger Martin:** There is a 25% in-kind contribution required from the state, is that correct?



- **Answer:** There is a required non-federal cost share. You can use in-kind contributions to support that cost share. You can use the normal means of meeting that cost share percentage like employee salaries.
- **Ginger Martin:** Once awarded, we can decide where we use that funding, so if we want to contract an entity such as Georgia Tech to research earthquake related matters?
 - **Answer:** Yes, but the sub-awardee has to meet the conditions of the award.
- **Ginger Martin:** Will you send the application?
 - **Answer:** The NOFO is being reviewed. Once approved, it will be posted online, and a message will be sent to all eligible states. In addition to an email, a GovDelivery will also be sent out to all subscribers, as well as a being posted on fema.gov.
- **Noriko Kibble:** Can you provide examples of ShakeOut activities a state can get if they don't receive direct assistance?
 - **Answer:** Other than in-direct activities a state might benefit from something like national level messaging, it'd have to be multi-state activities. For example, if a partner were to include in their workplan a multi-state activity that would benefit three different states in Region 4, that's something that would be considered for funding.
- **Althea Rizzo:** How do we track and verify the in-kind cost share?
 - **Answer:** That's going to be submitted as part of the application.
- **Althea Rizzo:** How is the funding going to be calibrated and how will we be notified if our funding amount changes?
 - **Answer:** It will take a day to recompute the figure and then we'll push the information out to the states that have elected to participate.
- **Althea Rizzo:** Does the travel support for states to national meetings also include consortia meetings or should we plan to put funds for travel in our plans?
 - **Answer:** There is an allocated \$3,000 for every state to attend the national meeting. You should plan for other events.
- **WSSPC-Matt Wall:** How will states provide input into selecting partners, and still be in compliance with open procurement requirements?
 - **Answer:** Who they elect to partner with is a decision they must make themselves. The sub-awardee will have to meet the NOFO requirements and the state also would have to. States that have long standing partnership/relationship will probably use those past connections.
- **WSSPC-Matt Wall:** My concern is that you'd have to put parts of contracting out to bid. Could you address this? How do states direct money without that bidding process?



- **Answer:** There's not a requirement for states to put out subawards to bids. It'll be a non-competitive cooperative agreement.
- **CUSEC-Jim Wilkinson:** By eliminating the state assistance scope of work, we can't build a budget on what we expect to do, so that will be a challenge. Also, did this go to NEMA EQ Sub-Committee?
 - **Answer:** It has not but thank you for the recommendation.

Wrap Up:

- Before closing the meeting, Jon elaborated that states can learn more about the administrative aspects of the grants through a few avenues: there is training on how to access the system, and an upcoming EMI training session in Emmitsburg, MD.
- David and Jon thanked everyone for attending.