

Benefit–Cost Analysis (BCA) Self-Assessment: Readiness, Data Practices & Organizational Capacity

Purpose:

This self-assessment helps entities evaluate whether its organization is positioned to develop strong, defensible Benefit-Cost Analyses (BCAs) and compete effectively for federal funding.

Instructions:

Rate each statement using the scale below.

Rating Scale

1 = Not in place 2 = Partially in place 3 = Mostly in place 4 = Fully in place / consistent practice

I. Data & Systems Readiness	1	2	3	4
1. We have consistent data standards and definitions across departments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Asset conditions, service levels, and historical cost data are readily accessible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Data used for planning, budgeting, and grants are reliable and routinely updated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Ownership for maintaining and validating data is clearly assigned.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TOTAL SCORE				

II. Governance & Ownership	1	2	3	4
5. There is clear executive ownership of BCAs and analytical work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Roles between planning, finance, operations, and grants are clearly defined.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. BCAs are treated as a core planning function—not just a grant requirement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Decision-making authority is clear when assumptions or tradeoffs arise.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TOTAL SCORE				

Local Infrastructure Hub

III. Cross-Functional Collaboration	1	2	3	4
9. Departments understand and take responsibility for their contribution to the data sets, which are used for BCAs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Finance and operations are involved in shaping project costs and schedules.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Our organization takes a whole-of-government approach in data practices to accurately measure project impacts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Narrative, budget, schedule, and BCA inputs are aligned before submission.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Inconsistencies are identified early enough to prevent late-stage rework.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TOTAL SCORE				

IV. Planning & Performance Management	1	2	3	4
14. Projects are designed with measurable outcomes from the outset.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Performance data is tracked in a way that supports future BCAs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Capital planning decisions consider long-term value, not just urgency.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. We can clearly explain how projects support strategic goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TOTAL SCORE				

V. Capacity & Capability	1	2	3	4
18. We know which BCAs we can complete internally and which require outside expertise.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Institutional knowledge improves with each application.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Staff understand agency-specific BCA expectations (USDOT, EPA, FEMA, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Our organization strategically considers community partners' data capacity and incorporates data sharing practices into MOUs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. We can confidently defend assumptions if questioned by reviewers or auditors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TOTAL SCORE				

FINAL TOTAL SCORE				
--------------------------	--	--	--	--



Local Infrastructure Hub

Scoring & Interpretation:

Total Possible Score: 88

65–88

Strong readiness. BCAs are a strategic strength.

45–64

Moderate readiness. Improvements needed to remain competitive.

Below 45

High risk. BCAs likely reflect deeper organizational gaps.

Key Takeaways:

- **Low scores** often indicate data silos, unclear ownership, or reactive project development.
- **High scores** indicate strong governance, integrated planning, and competitive positioning.
- **BCAs are a mirror:** their quality reflects organizational maturity, not just technical skill.



THE UNITED STATES
CONFERENCE OF MAYORS



RESULTS
FOR AMERICA



Bloomberg
Philanthropies



Ford
Foundation

