**Mitigation Matters Research Award**   
**Report Template and Checklist**

This report template is intended for recipients of the [Mitigation Matters Research Award](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/mitigation-matters-award-guidelines).

**Getting Started**

Start by saving a copy of this Word document to your computer and renaming the file. When complete, your text (not including images, tables, figures, or references) should be 20 pages, double-spaced, or approximately **5,000 words**.

*A note regarding headings:* The template consists of pre-formatted headings for the Introduction, Literature Review, Research Questions, Research Design, Results or Findings, Discussion, and Conclusion. Prompts are provided in each section to guide your writing. You are welcome to rename the headings or add additional ones if you would like. We strongly encourage you to use subheadings—formatted according to [APA guidelines](https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/paper-format/headings)—within each section to organize your writing.

**Style Guide**

Please review the [Natural Hazards Center Publication Style Guide](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/publication-style-guide) for detailed guidance on our writing style, including our requirements that authors use [human-centered language](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/publication-style-guide#human) and [plain style](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/publication-style-guide#plain). The guide also explains how to format headings, tables, figures, appendices, and more. Scroll to the end of this document for a checklist of our major style requirements. [Please review this checklist prior to submitting your report.](#StyleChecklist)

**Editorial Assistance**

We are here to support you at every stage of the writing process. Please contact the Natural Hazards Center editing team with any questions at [haz.research.awards@colorado.edu](mailto:haz.research.awards@colorado.edu).

**Title (12 Words or Less in** [**Title Case**](https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/capitalization/title-case)**)**

First Author Name, Affiliation   
Second Author Name, Affiliation  
Third Author Name, Affiliation  
Fourth Author Name, Affiliation  
Fifth Author Name, Affiliation

Note: For further guidance on who should be included as an author, see [The Ethics of Manuscript Authorship: Best Practices for Attribution](https://www.aje.com/en/arc/ethics-manuscript-authorship/).

# Abstract

Please include a brief abstract of no more than 250 words. The abstract should provide a concise overview of your project, including short descriptions of the following:

* the purpose of the study or the primary research questions,
* the research approach (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, etc.) and primary methods (e.g., interviews, surveys, document review, etc.)
* the preliminary results or findings (please limit the discussion to the most significant results or findings)
* the study’s key implications for mitigation practice or policy

Abstracts should be a single paragraph and should be significantly different from the introduction of the report.

**Keywords:** (include three to five keywords)

# Introduction

Begin your double-spaced report with a brief introduction. The introduction serves to capture the reader’s interest and make them want to read the whole report. It should achieve the following: First, it should concisely describe the study’s topic, setting, and the hazards or disaster context. Second, it should state the study’s aims. A purpose statement (i.e., “the purpose of this study was to” or “this study aimed to”) can often serve the latter function, but you are welcome to try other approaches. Third, the introduction should highlight the study’s importance to the field of hazard mitigation.

# Literature Review

The literature review should concisely review major findings from previous research on your study’s topic. In your review, take care to identify the gaps in knowledge that your study will address. This section should be tightly linked to your research topic and questions; do not discuss literature that is beyond their scope.

If you are reviewing multiple topics or themes, please use [subheadings](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/publication-style-guide#headings) to organize this section. Note that this section is normally written in past or present perfect tense. Always use past tense when referring to another researcher’s work. Information on [the proper tense for all sections is available in this chart](https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/grammar/verb-tense).

# Research Questions

Use this section to list the specific research questions that you will answer in this report, as in the following example. In this report, we answered two research questions:  
 1. The first question.

2. The second question.

Please ensure that all research questions listed here are addressed in the report’s Findings and/or Discussion section. Research questions that are not answered or discussed in those latter sections should be deleted or moved to the Future Research Directions portion of the Conclusion.

# Research Design

Begin this section with an explanation of your research approach (e.g., quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, etc.) and your rationale for choosing it. The remaining parts of the section should be organized using [subheadings](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/publication-style-guide#headings). Note that second-level headings are bold, flush left; or you can select Heading 2 from the Style menu in this Word document for auto-formatting.

The content and order of the subheadings will vary depending on the type of study you conducted. *The headings suggested below are optional and can be retitled according to author preference.*

## Study Site

This section is for a description of the study site and your rationale for basing your study in this location. Describe the social and cultural contexts of the site. If applicable, you may also provide a fuller account of the hazard or disaster context that you did not include in the introduction.

## Community or Research Partners

Use this section to describe the community or research partners you worked with during the study. Partners may include local researchers, government agencies, community organizations, or community members. Describe your partners, how you built a relationship with them, and the roles they played in the design or implementation of the study. Lastly, consider including a brief discussion of reciprocity, or the actions you took to ensure your partners, or the study site, benefited from the project. For more information on reciprocity, review the [CONVERGE Reciprocity in Hazards and Disaster Research Training Module](https://converge.colorado.edu/resources/training-modules/).

## [Insert Data Collection Method (e.g., Survey, Interviews, etc.) Here]

Your report should include a brief description of each data collection activity in your study. Start by renaming the second-level subheading above to the data collection method that you used. For example, if you did a survey, you write “Survey” above.

Next, create third-level subheadings that correspond to each step in the data collection process. Note that third-level headings are bold italic, flush left; you can also select Heading 3 from the Style menu in this Word document for auto-formatting.

For survey studies, consider using the following third-level subheadings:

### Sampling Strategy

### Survey Measures

### Survey Distribution

### Participant Consent and Other Details

### Survey Sample

### Data Analysis Procedures

## [Second Data Collection Method—For Multi-Methods Studies Only]

If you did a multi-methods study, you should create additional second-level subheadings for each method you employed. For example, if you did surveys and interviews in your study, you would add a new second-level heading called “Interviews.”

For interview studies, consider using the following third-level subheadings:

### Sampling Strategy

### Participant Recruitment and Consent

### Interview Sample

### Interview Guide

### Interview Setting and Other Details

### Data Analysis Procedures

## Ethical Considerations

For human subjects research, please identify the approving Institutional Review Board and date of approval. We also encourage you to discuss other ethical concerns beyond the IRB process that were involved in your research. To prepare for writing this section, review the [CONVERGE Broader Ethical Considerations for Hazards and Disaster Researchers Training Module](https://converge.colorado.edu/resources/training-modules/) which describes how ethical concerns are infused in the entire research lifecycle.

# Results or Findings

In this section, describe the preliminary results or findings from your study. APA Style recommends using the heading “Results” for quantitative studies and “Findings” for qualitative studies. We encourage you to use subheadings that correspond to your research questions to organize your writing. This section should only include results that are related to your research questions. Marginal results should not be included in your report. In some cases, they may be appropriate to place in an appendix.

# Discussion

Your report should include a discussion of the results in relation to your research questions. What answers to your research questions are emerging from your findings or results? What are the implications of your findings for theory or practice? You may place this discussion in a separate section as we have done here or, alternatively, you can incorporate it into the Results or Findings section above.

# Conclusions

Conclude your paper by writing about the topics listed below.

## Implications for Mitigation Practice or Policy

Describe the implications of your findings for mitigation practice or policy. This section should be approximately 250 words and carefully written. We encourage authors to focus on the most significant implications of the study and write about them at length. Do not describe implications that are not related to your research.

## Limitations

Describe any limitations of your research design or other aspects of your study. Explain to readers how these limitations affect the interpretation of results or the research applications.

## Future Research Directions

Conclude your report with a brief description of any plans you have for developing this study in the future, including new research questions that were revealed by this study, methods or analytical procedures you will use to address limitations, or work with practitioners that you are pursuing to develop research applications. If you have no plans to continue the study, consider providing recommendations to other researchers who may be interested in taking up aspects of this work.

**Acknowledgments.** This is an optional section. If you would like to acknowledge any people, groups, or organizations that helped your team carry out this project, please write their names and any words of gratitude in paragraph form. Do not use bullet points or numbered lists.

# References

Please provide full references in APA style for all citations in the text. Do not include references that do not have a matching in-text citation. Review the section on [References](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/publication-style-guide#references) in the [Natural Hazards Center Publication Style Guide](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/publication-style-guide) for more information on formatting references in APA Style.

# Illustrative Photo Attachments (Optional)

We encourage authors to submit [photos of their research site or project](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/mitigation-matters/report-guidelines#photos). If you are including [illustrative photos](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/publication-style-guide#photos) with your report, please include the following information for each photo.

* File Name:
* Photographer Name:
* Permission to Use Publicly: Yes or No
* Date:
* Location:
* Caption: (no more than 30 words)

**Style Requirements Checklist**

Prior to submitting your report, please review the checklist below to make sure it adheres to the [Natural Hazards Center Publication Style Guide](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/publication-style-guide). Please return this completed checklist as a separate attachment with your report.

* Authors
  + Are all authors listed on the first page with their current affiliations?
  + Have all authors submitted or updated their bios using this [online form](https://hazards.colorado.edu/bio-submission/request?src=author)?
* Formatting and Length
  + Is the report approximately 20 pages and double spaced (~5,000 words)? Excessively long or short reports will be returned to authors for revisions.
  + Is the report double-spaced?
  + Are tables and figures embedded in the report and placed immediately after the paragraph where they are first mentioned? (Please do not place figures or tables at the end of the report or in a separate document.)
* Titles and Headings
  + Are headings and titles (including table and figure titles) written in [title case](https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/capitalization/title-case)?
  + Have all acronyms been removed from titles and headings?
  + Are [headings](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/publication-style-guide#headings) formatted according to the [five levels in APA Style](https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/paper-format/headings)?
* [Quotes](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/publication-style-guide#quotes)
  + Do all direct quotes from sourced material include a citation with a page number or other identifying information [if there is no page number](https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/quotations/no-page-numbers)?
  + Are quotes longer than 40 words in [block format](https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/quotations)?
* [Tables](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/publication-style-guide#tables) and [Figures](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/publication-style-guide#figures)
  + Does each table or figure convey essential information about the project? Please do not include nonessential tables or figures. These may be placed in an appendix.
  + Are tables and figures numbered sequentially in the document (e.g., Figure 1, Table 1, etc.)?
  + Are tables and figures “called out” in the text—meaning each one is identified by its number and briefly explained?
  + Are figures clear (not blurry) with legible font and legends that explain symbols?
  + Are figures embedded in the document AND attached as a separate image quality file (e.g., JPG or PNG)? (Tables do not need to be attached separately.)
  + Do tables or figures reprinted or adapted from an outside source have [copyright attribution notes](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/publication-style-guide#copyright)?
* [References and In-Text Citations](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/publication-style-guide#references)
  + Are your references and in-text citations formatted in APA style?
  + Does each in-text citation have a matching full reference in the reference list?
* [Appendices](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/publication-style-guide#appendices)
  + Are all appendices compiled and attached as one separate Word document?
  + Is each appendix clearly labeled?
* [Other Style Requirements](https://hazards.colorado.edu/research/publication-style-guide#other)
  + Are all acronyms spelled out upon first mention?
  + Are all *em* dashes formatted as a long dash—with no space between words?