



Preparing Applications for the **BROWNFIELDS JOB TRAINING PROGRAM**

May 2, 2024

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Agenda

- Program Overview
- NOFO Information
- Prior Awardee Examples
- Federal Application Best Practices
- Closing Remarks



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Program Overview



- Formerly the Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Program (EWDJT)
- Passage of Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Bipartisan Infrastructure Law) provided new funding stream, program scope and title, changing to Brownfield Job Training Program
- Funding made available through EPA's Office of Brownfields and Revitalization
- Last two funding cycles, a total of \$21 million in awards were made to 43 organizations



Program Overview



- Objective: recruit, train, and place unemployed and underemployed residents of solid and hazardous waste-impacted communities with the skills needed to obtain full-time, sustainable employment.
- Promotes facilitation of activities related to assessment, cleanup, or preparation of contaminated sites, including brownfields, for reuse, while simultaneously building a local workforce with the skills needed to perform remediation work supportive of environmental protection and environmental health and safety.



NOFO – Applicant Eligibility

Who Can Apply?

- General purpose unit of local government
- Land clearance authority or other quasi-governmental authority
- Government entity created by State Legislature
- Regional Council or group of local governments
- State
- Indian Tribe other than in Alaska, including consortia
- Alaskan Native Regional Corporation, Alaska Native Village Corp.
- Nonprofit organization exempt from taxation under Section 501, except 501(c)(4)

Entities may not apply for more than one FY25 Brownfields Job Training Grant



NOFO – Threshold Eligibility Criteria

- Threshold criteria are pass/fail and must be included in the Narrative Information Sheet.
- Responses are required for the following:
 - Applicant eligibility – Describe how you are eligible
 - Demonstration that project does not duplicate other federally funded environmental job training programs
 - Required HAZWOPER Training
 - Federal funds requested
 - Conformity with instructions and format requirements
 - Training curriculum chart indicating course costs
 - Target area
 - Previous funding requirement



NOFO – Use of Grant Funds



- Brownfields assessment and cleanup training
- Training in areas of community involvement and site preparation for sustainability and equitable reuse and development
- Variety of other brownfields related environmental training activities:
 - “Green remediation” technologies
 - Stormwater management; green infrastructure installation
 - Emergency planning, preparedness, and response training
 - Enhanced environmental health and safety training related to site remediation
 - Energy efficiency, and alternative energy technologies



NOFO – Eligible Uses of Grant Funds

Grant funds must be used for direct programmatic costs such as:

- Personnel costs, including fringe benefits, for instructors
- Personnel and data infrastructure costs for reports
- Costs for screening and placement of individuals in program
- Personnel costs for caseworkers or other specialists who work with participants to identify barriers they face to employment
- Costs for training materials and work gear
- Development and refinement of existing curricula for training
- Personnel costs for employer engagement activities
- Training in assessment, inventory, analysis, and remediation of sites



NOFO – Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

Grant funds cannot be used for a range of activities, including:

- Training in general construction skills and trades
- Training in natural resource extraction or related processes
- Conducting actual site assessments or cleanups
- Conducting response activities often associated with cleanups
- General life skills, education activities
- Scholarships to support students' enrollment in college courses
- Membership fees
- Providing refreshments – except at graduation ceremonies
- Administrative costs in excess of 5%



NOFO – Anticipated Outputs/Outcomes

Applicants must describe outputs (performance measures), and outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements. They are defined as follows:

- **Outputs:** Environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal or objective that will be provided over a period of time or by specified date
- **Outcomes:** Result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out the activities under the grant



NOFO – Award Information



- For FY 2024, the total funding available was \$12 million. EPA anticipated awarding approximately 24 grants of up to \$500,000.
- Awarded \$7 million to 14 applicants.
- Grants will be awarded in form of a cooperative agreement, which requires EPA Project Officers to be substantially involved in overseeing work performed by selected recipients.



Community Need – (45 points)

1.A Community Description (25 points)

- Extent to which city, town, or geographic area description identifies environmental, social, public health, economic issues and brownfields challenges and impacts
- Identifies and describes community challenges and explains why targeted area was selected for training
- Extent to which demographic statistics are provided for target area
- Extent to which applicant identifies specific groups of high-need individuals who will benefit from the program



Community Need – (45 points)

1.B Labor Market Demand (20 points)

- Extent to a labor market assessment was conducted using current data and explanation of methods used
- Extent to which labor market assessment identified demand for environmental workforce in your target area
- Extent to which results of labor market assessment are incorporated into curriculum, including demonstrating how students will earn credentials that are in high-demand



Training Program Description – (20 points)

Each application will be evaluated on quality and extent to which it addresses:

- Degree to which proposed training curriculum is comprehensive, achievable, and only contains eligible activities listed in Section I.C **(5 points)**
- Extent to which training program incorporates sustainable practices **(5 points)**
- Extent to which courses and certifications offered meet the hiring needs of employers in the community **(10 points)**



Budget (10 points)

Each application will be evaluated on quality and extent to which it addresses:

- Degree of clarity on how each cost estimate was developed and the extent to which costs per task are presented in detail **(5 points)**
- Extent to which proposed cost estimate is reasonable to implement training program and correlates with proposed tasks
 - Projects that allocate at least 60% of funds to tasks directly associated with instruction will be evaluated more favorably **(5 points)**



Program Structure, Outputs and Outcomes (45 points)

4.A Outputs and Outcomes (10 points)

- Extent to which program outputs are identified and align with specific activities of program (5 points)
- Degree to which post-program outcomes are clearly described and reflect challenges presented in Community Need section (5 points)



Program Structure, Outputs and Outcomes – (45 points)

4.B Recruitment and Screening (20 points)

- Quality of recruitment strategies to unemployed/underemployed individuals, including from underserved populations in target area (5 points)
- Quality of screening approaches and extent to which they are appropriate for target population (5 points)
- Quality of approach to retaining students in training and extent to which they are appropriate for target population (5 points)
- Extent to which accessibility of program to target populations will alleviate burden of fees to students and accessibility



Program Structure, Outputs and Outcomes (45 points)

4.C Program Support (10 points)

- Extent to which program provides support to graduates to ensure employment and employment retention
- Extent to which hiring incentives planned to be implemented that will enhance employment opportunities and extent to which there is a plan to track graduates

4.D Program Sustainability (5 points)

- Extent to which the organization has a plan to continue environmental training program once grant is closed



Partnerships – (45 points)

5.A Partnerships (10 points)

- Extent to which application demonstrates variety of partners committed to supporting the project and their commitments to contribute
- Extent to which Partnership Letters demonstrate an understanding of proposed project and identify specific commitments to support the project

5.B Collaboration with Environmental Entities (5 points)

- Extent to which there is collaboration with organizations performing environmental work in target area and specific commitments by those partners to contribute to project



Partnerships – (45 points)

5.C Collaboration with Job-Readiness/Life Skills (5 points)

- Extent to which there is collaboration with organizations that provide students with job readiness and job-readiness skills and specific commitments by partners to contribute to project

5.D Collaboration with Community (5 points)

- Extent to which there is collaboration with organizations and individuals in target community and how that collaboration will continue throughout the program



Partnerships – (45 points)

5.E Collaboration with Employers (20 points)

- Extent to which there is collaboration with employers or local labor unions committed to enhancing a graduate's chance of being hired and specific commitments by those employers
- Extent of employer or union involvement in development the program
- Extent to which there is collaboration with employers or unions committed to enhancing student learning and specific commitments by those employers or unions



Leveraging – (5 points)

Each application will be evaluated on quality and extent to which it demonstrates other sources of monetary funding and resources that will support job training program and whether they are firm or if they are an anticipated leveraged resource.

Applications with firm leveraged funding and resources may garner more points



NOFO – Evaluation Criteria

Programmatic Capability – (30 points)

7.A Grant Management System (5 points)

- How efficient and effective of a system in place to manage and administer the grant

7.B Organizational Experience (10 points)

- How efficient and effective the organization is at working with local community or proposed target area
- How efficient and effective the organization is at providing training and developing a local workforce

7.C Audit Findings (5 points)

- Extent to which the organization has any adverse audit findings and, if so, how they were corrected



Programmatic Capability – (30 points)

7.D Past Performance and Accomplishments (10 points)

For current or past EPA Brownfields Job Training or Environmental Workforce Development Job Training Grant Recipients within last 10 years

- Demonstrated ability to successfully manage past EPA Brownfields Job Training or EWDJT Grants and proven success throughout the different phases of work under the grant



Programmatic Capability – (30 points)

7.D Past Performance and Accomplishments **(10 points)**

For those that haven't received EPA Brownfields Training or Environmental Workforce Development Job Training Grant Recipients within last 10 years

- Demonstrated ability to successfully manage federal or non-federal grant(s), and the performance of all phases of work under each, including to successfully complete and comply with workplan, schedule, progress, project goals, use of finds, terms, and reporting



Other Factors

EPA may consider the following factors among top applicants:

- Community population is 10,000 or less
- Applicant is new to Program
- Applicant is federal recognized Indian Tribe or U.S. territory or assisting either
- Applicant is seeking to serve veterans
- Whether a target area is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2012 or later) or is closing



Other Factors

EPA may consider the following factors among top applicants:

- Distribution of funds between urban and non-urban areas
- Whether proposed site is located within, or includes, a county experiencing “persistent poverty” where 20% or more of its population has lived in poverty of the past 30 years
- Distribution of funds among EPA’s ten regions
- Whether the applicant has not previously been awarded a Brownfields Job Training Grant
- Whether a target area is located within, or includes, a census tract in which 20% or more of the population lives below national poverty level



NOFO – Review and Selection Process



- Timely submitted applications will be reviewed by appropriate EPA Regional Office to determine eligibility. Applications that pass eligibility threshold review will be evaluated by national evaluation panels.
- Recommendations for selection based on completed evaluations will be referred to the EPA Headquarters Selection Official, who is responsible for further consideration of applications and final selection of grant recipients.
- Notification of awardees is anticipated in first quarter of FY 2025. In past two funding cycles, awards have been announced in December.



Application Submission

- All application materials must be submitted in English
- Narrative and Narrative Information Sheet must be on 8 ½ x 11 inch paper, single-spaced, and in Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri font, sized no smaller than 11 point.
- Photos and graphics will not be considered
- Applications that exceed specified page limits will not be reviewed
- Applicants that do not meet style requirements will not be reviewed



Application Submission Checklist

- Federal application materials on Grants.gov
- Narrative Information Sheet (3-page limit, single-spaced)
- The Narrative with responses to all seven ranking criteria (12-page limit, single-spaced)
- Attachments (15-page limit)
 - Documentation of applicant eligibility
 - Milestone Schedule
 - Documentation of Other Factors
 - Partnership letters identified in application





2022 Awards

- The U.S. EPA selected 29 organizations in December 2022 to receive \$14.3 million for FY 2023

2023 Awards

- The U.S. EPA selected 14 organizations in December 2023 to receive nearly \$7 million for FY 2024



Prior Awardee Examples



- Cornerstones of Care (MO)
- E3 Solutions, Inc. (AL)
- Groundwork Ohio River Valley (OH)





Cornerstones of Care – Kansas City, MO

- \$458,358 award
- Train 50 students and place at least 25 in environmental jobs
- Training program includes 180 hours of instruction in
 - 40-hour HAZWOPER
 - Eco-Community Build Action and Engagement
 - Forestry and Landscape Restoration
 - Environmental Data Analysis
 - Conservation Job Readiness
 - General Industry
- Students will earn up to two federal certifications
- Targeting students in specified Kansas City neighborhoods, specifically under-resourced youth





E3 Solutions, Inc. – Selma, AL

- \$500,000 award
- Train 90 students and place at least 85 in environmental jobs
- Training program includes 248 hours of instruction in:
 - 40-Hour HAZWOPER
 - First Aid/CPR
 - Lead RRP
 - Air Monitoring
 - Much more
- Students can earn up to 8 state and federal certifications
- Partners include PM Environmental, ENGR Solutions, AL Dept. of Environmental Management, Wallace Community College, Office of the Mayor





Groundwork Ohio River Valley – Cincinnati, OH

- \$499,270 award
- Train 40 students and place at least 30 in environmental jobs
- Training program includes 154 hours of instruction in:
 - 40-Hour HAZWOPER
 - OSHA 10 and OSHA 8-hour Confined Space Entry Operations
 - Asbestos Building Inspector/Management Planner
 - Lead-Based Paint Inspector/Risk Assessor
- Students will also participate in Green Corps Practicum for training on invasive species, job readiness, financial literacy, environmental justice, etc.
- Key partners include Office of Environment and Sustainability, Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati, and the Davey Resource Group



Grant Application Best Practices



- Have a unique entity identifier
- Have an active System for Award Management (SAM) account
- Be registered in Grants.gov
- Be designated as your organization's authorized organizational representative
- Follow style, format, and submission guidelines
 - Check if there is a font style or size required
 - Margin requirements
 - Tab or indentation exclusion?
 - Page length



Closing Remarks



- Thank you for joining today's webinar
- For questions or if you would like to be connected with other organizations who might be interested in joining or forming a coalition to apply for this grant opportunity contact:
 - Mitchell Smith at msmith@cdfa.net

