

October 24, 2012

Notes from Brownfields Professional Learning Community (PLC) – Cycle 7, Session 5, (session 74)

Topics: Updates from Washington
 Funding sources prior to, during, and after EPA grant awards
 Grant opportunities
 Special Webinar: NGA
 Upcoming events and reminders

Updates from Washington

It is likely that the next Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grant Request for Proposals (RFPs) will be released in December with awards announced in late spring or early summer. It's not too early to begin preparations for responding to the RFP. For guidance, check out last year's RFP. While it's likely to be slightly different regarding curriculum, it's also likely to be similar in qualification and ranking criteria. We will keep PLC members informed with updates.

EPA has issued an RFP for Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, Wide Area Planning, and Cleanup grants that are due November 19 and November 30. Find out who in the community may be submitting proposals. Partner and coordinate early. Call the Mayor's office or the Office of Economic Development for contacts. This effort is an excellent start in developing a stakeholder network. Let them know you are thinking about an environmental workforce job development and training program. The RFP can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/applicat.htm>. The FY13 Proposal Guidelines for Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Grants are posted at <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/applicat.htm>. The deadline is November 30, 2012.

Funding sources prior to, during, and after EPA grant awards

This week we were only able to consider startup funding. We will continue with operational funding and sustainability on November 7th.

Observations

- 1) Of the 15 awards made this year, one was a community college as primary partner, six were local governments, and eight were community organizations. Note the interest of city and local governments in developing workforce development programs. All of these programs include linkages to other local and regional governmental programs. While governmental organizations act as a fiscal agent, they remain more as coordinators who reach out to community organizations and colleges for program implementation including recruitment and training.
- 2) Of the eight 8 community organizations, most were already involved in some type of training activity. Often construction trades were being offered, with a proposed expansion to include environmental workforce training.
- 3) Of the 15 organizations funded, all of them were already established. Perhaps they did not provide environmental training, but they had fiscal resources and infrastructure in place.

Implications regarding startup funding

The best source of startup funding and resources to get your workforce development program operational is to associate with a large established program. If you are interested in starting or restarting an environmental workforce development initiative, it is important that you become associated with one of the types of groups just described. Starting programs from scratch is a long-term process and not

likely accomplished with a single project. Handing over project responsibilities to larger organizations can unleash new start up resources not available to unassociated programs (30% of something may be better than 100% of nothing). We have seen startup programs associated with larger organizations branch off as independent programs as they expanded and matured.

Pros of partnering with existing larger community groups or governmental agencies

- 1) Immediate access to fiscal, legal, and accounting resources with federal grant experience.
- 2) Immediate access to infrastructure and facilities.
- 3) Access to leveraged resources such as recruitment, placement, ex-offender, and life skills programs.
- 4) Short cuts to existing relationships with governmental officials and staff.
- 5) Opportunities to merge with larger training and employment programs.
- 6) Inside track to other city programs and projects, some not available to unassociated organizations.
- 7) The ability to branch off independently as the program matures.

Cons of partnering with existing larger community groups or governmental agencies

- 1) Loss of control relating to budgets and operations.
- 2) Risk of becoming just another governmental or community program.
- 3) Risk of becoming a low priority project among many larger programs.
- 4) Potential administrative conflicts regarding program operation and direction.
- 5) Constraints and restrictions imposed on governmental organizations.
- 6) Public perception regarding the role of the government in the community.
- 7) Potential for political or personality conflicts.

If you examine the fastest way to obtain startup resources, the bottom line is to consider approaching a large community or governmental organization as a potential partner.

Grant opportunities

EPA Announces Opportunity to Apply for 2013 Environmental Justice Small Grants

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced that it is seeking applicants for a total of \$1.5 million in environmental justice small grants to be awarded in 2013. EPA's environmental justice efforts aim to ensure equal environmental and health protections for all Americans, regardless of race or socioeconomic status. The grants enable nonprofit organizations to conduct research, provide education, and develop solutions to local health and environmental issues in communities overburdened by harmful pollution. Grants are available for up to \$30,000 each.

The 2013 grant solicitation is now open and will close on Jan. 7, 2013. Applicants must be incorporated nonprofits or tribal organizations working to educate, empower, and enable their communities to understand and address local environmental and public health issues. EPA will host four pre-application teleconference calls on Oct. 30, 2012; Nov. 14, 2012; Dec. 1, 2012; and Dec. 13, 2012 to help applicants understand the requirements.

For more information on the Environmental Justice Small Grants 2013 Request for Proposals and for the schedule of pre-application teleconference calls, please visit

<http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/resources/publications/grants/ej-smgrants-rfp-2013.pdf>.

Special Webinar: NGA

(Shared by Ann Black from Santa Fe Community College)

NGA will be hosting job placement guru Ray Gooch for a series of intensive Webinars on increasing job placement rates on Friday, November 2, from 1:00-3:00pm. This is the first of two sessions for ARRA Grantees that wish to gain more insight into applying the principals utilized by recruiters in Extreme Candidate Preparation. Additionally, they will cover the methods employed in surfacing the openings in the "Hidden Job Market", which according to the DOL is comprised of approximately 80% of all job openings and are never advertised. The event address for attendees is <https://nga.webex.com/nga/onstage/g.php?t=a&d=592826984>. Dial 800.749.9945, passcode 5166171.

The second session will be held Thursday, November 8, from 1:00-3:00pm. This is for ARRA Grantees that explore the effective methods for connecting with employers that have advertised jobs and those in the "Hidden Job Market." They will demonstrate how candidates can get an edge on the competition by applying techniques unknown to those who merely apply for positions online or through company HR portals. Additionally, the finer points of the interviewing that set a candidate apart from their competition will be discussed. The event address for attendees is <https://nga.webex.com/nga/onstage/g.php?d=258561013&t=a>. Dial 800.749.9945, passcode 5166171.

Upcoming Events / Reminders

2013 Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conference

April 16-18, 2013

Washington Hilton, Washington, DC

The 2013 conference will focus on 1) how to grow the clean economy to scale; 2) the role of strategic partnerships between the public and private sectors in solving the country's pressing economic and environmental challenges; 3) the role of regulations in creating new markets; and 4) how people in every part of the U.S. are working collaboratively for social, economic and environmental justice, while building an economy with good jobs.

The program committee welcomes original contributions or ideas for workshops or panels. Programs are encouraged that highlight collaboration between different constituencies, including business and industry, government agencies, labor unions, community groups, and the environmental community. Proposals that provide tangible tools and are interactive are preferred. All submissions must be received by November 13, 2012, and are entered online. Please visit www.greenjobsconference.org/2013.

National Brownfields 2013 Conference, Atlanta, GA, May 15-17, 2013. For more information, please visit <http://www.brownfieldsconference.org>.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Next PLC Session: November 7, 2012
2:00pm EDT

Topics: Establishment, implementation, and sustainability of programs

Feel free to invite a guest! Send your contact information to Mike Senew at msenew@aol.com.

Visit our *Brownfields Toolbox* Web site at <http://www.brownfields-toolbox.org> for more information on Brownfields Job Training programs.