

September 27, 2017



Notes from the Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)—Cycle 17, Session 7

This series of bi-weekly phone calls examines effective EWDJT strategies from experienced grantees. PLC calls share ideas among successful grantees and prepare interested organizations for the next EPA Request for Proposals. Calls will be a mix of open discussion, workforce development news, resources, and presentations from current grantees.

- Topics:
1. News from Washington and HMTRI
 2. Questions from PLC members: Several large EPA requests for proposals were issued. Can EWDJT grantees apply for ARC grants?
 3. Working with ARC grantees —ARC applicants must partner with EWDJT programs.
 - Tips on coordinating ARC and EWDJT proposals.
 - Identifying and contacting potential ARC partners.
 4. Webinars
 5. Meetings and workshops
 6. Technical assistance—TAB, NIEHS, HMTRI
 7. Tune in to the next PLC

1. NEWS FROM WASHINGTON AND HMTRI

On September 16, Requests for Proposals (RFP) were issued for EPA Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, and Cleanup (ARC) grants with a due date of November 16, 2017. If all goes as planned, the 2018 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) RFP should be issued in about a month (late October) with a due date before the end of the year. Applicants should keep in mind the difficulties in setting up meetings during the holiday season.

The latest issue of [CONNECT News](#) was just issued. If you missed it, a copy is archived on the [Brownfields Toolbox](#) website along with presentations from this year's All-Grantee meeting and much more.

2. QUESTIONS FROM PLC MEMBERS

This week, several large EPA Brownfields RFPs were issued. Can EWDJT grantees apply for ARC grants?

EPA's Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization (OBLR) just issued three RFPs totaling \$50 million. Approximately 198 cities, municipalities, towns, and other governmental entities will receive assistance to assess, fund, and clean up Brownfields in their communities. While none of these grants have a direct component associated with environmental training, they all have been advised to form partnerships with EWDJT programs. Today's PLC session is all about partnering with ARC grants.

- 3. WORKING WITH ARC GRANTEES**
- ARC applicants must partner with EWDJT programs.
 - Tips on coordinating ARC and EWDJT proposals.
 - Identifying and contacting potential ARC partners.

—ARC applicants must partner with EWDJT programs.

EPA's Brownfields program empowers states, local governments, and other stakeholders to work together to identify and clean up environmentally degraded properties in their communities. A Brownfields site is real property that cannot be reused because of the presence or potential presence of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants. In 2002, the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act was passed which provides EPA financial assistance to eligible applicants through four competitive grant programs: assessment grants, revolving loan fund grants, cleanup grants, and job training grants. Additional funding support is provided to state and Tribal response programs through a separate mechanism.

[U.S. EPA Brownfields Assessment Grants](#)

Assessment grants provide funding to inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct planning and community involvement related to Brownfields sites. These grants are available to state, local, and Tribal governments and quasi-governmental entities. Up to \$200,000 is available per site, with larger amounts available with a waiver or for a coalition of applicants. This year (FY18), approximately 145 grants will be awarded for a total of \$33 million.

[U.S. EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grants](#)

Cleanup grants provide funding to carry out cleanup activities at Brownfield sites. These grants are available to state, local, and Tribal governments; quasi-governmental entities; and nonprofit organizations. The applicant must own the site. Up to \$200,000 is available per site, and the grant requires a 20 percent cost share. This year (FY18), approximately 38 grants will be awarded for a total of \$7.5 million.

[U.S. EPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund \(RLF\) Grants](#)

RLF grants provide funding to capitalize a revolving loan fund and to provide subgrants to carry out cleanup activities at Brownfield sites. When loans are repaid, the loan amount is returned into the fund and then recycled for use by other borrowers, providing an ongoing source of capital within a community. Eligible applicants include state, local, and tribal governments and quasi-governmental entities. Up to \$1,000,000 is available with a 20 percent cost share requirement, and at least 60 percent of the total amount must be used for the RLF. This year (FY18), approximately 15 grants will be awarded for a total of \$9 million.

All of these RFPs have just been released. They are administered by EPA's OBLR which also is responsible for the EWDJT grant program. The EWDJT RFP will be issued in about a month. For each RFP, applicants are given about 60 days to prepare and submit their proposals. For prospective EWDJT applicants, it is

important to note the similarity and common evaluation criteria used in each RFP. Threshold criteria, ranking criteria for screening, and special factors are almost identical for each type of grant.

When the EWDJT RFP is issued, applicants will need the same information that ARC applicants are collecting as part of their application. One particular standout in the ranking criteria for each of these grants is the request for partnerships with EWDJT programs. It is highly likely that EWDJT applicants will be requested to work with the ARC grantees. Below is the wording that appears in each of the ARC requests for proposals.

“Cleanup RFP, page 35 | Assessment RFP, page 38 | RLF RFP, page 27

“d. Partnerships with Workforce Development Programs. Describe planned efforts to promote local hiring and procurement or link members of the community to potential employment opportunities in brownfields assessment, cleanup, or redevelopment related to your proposed projects. Such efforts may include, but are not limited to, partnering with local workforce development entities or Brownfields job training grantees. A list of Brownfields job training grantees is available in the Brownfields Grant Fact Sheet Tool at https://cfpub.epa.gov/bf_factsheets/.”

—Tips on coordinating ARC and EWDJT proposals.

The above example shows how important it is for EWDJT grantees and prospective applicants to contact and coordinate with new and current ARC grantees. ARC applicants and grantees may include cities, townships, counties, municipalities, or other governmental organizations qualified to submit proposals. Examples of potential information sharing and data collection between ARC and EWDJT proposals may include:

- Characterization of target communities
- Employment, demographic, and income profiles
- Coordination and partnering with community groups
- Identification of potential partners
- Leveraging opportunities
- Public awareness and community notifications

Contacting potential ARC applicants early is important, especially in regard to public hearings and community notification. Keep in mind that ARC grant writers have a one-month head start on preparing their submission. If coordinated properly, EWDJT applicants can include public announcements of their intent to submit an application for workforce development at the same city council meetings and public hearings conducted for ARC grants. If EWDJT applicants wait until the RFP is released, these coordination opportunities may be lost.

It is strongly advised that serious EWDJT grantees download an ARC RFP (cleanup) and compare it to last year's EWDJT RFP to identify synergistic and partnership opportunities.

—Identifying and contacting potential ARC partners.

After establishing the importance of coordinating and partnering with current and potential ARC grant recipients, the obvious question is—How do we find and partner with the appropriate contacts?

We would suggest two approaches. The first is the simplest and most direct. During the last several PLC sessions, we have suggested the importance of making contacts in city hall. In some cases, it may be the county commissioner, city council, or Tribal leadership. The mayor's office is a good place to start. Find out who in which organizations is working on Brownfields. Use the generic term which will lead you to more specific offices. In each case, find out who will be submitting EPA grant proposals. At that point, appointments and meetings need to be scheduled. Remember, ARC applicants and grantees need coordination with EWDJT applicants as much as EWDJT grantees must partner with ARC programs. In addition to contacts with city government, searching may lead to other governmental agencies in county government, town councils, or other governmental sanctioned organizations participating in Brownfields assessment and cleanup.

Using the Brownfields Grant Fact Sheet Search is another interesting and comprehensive way of learning the history and current status of ARC activities in the surrounding community. EPA has constructed a detailed search and research tool that allows users to identify OBLR grants awarded from 1992 through today. OBLR grant awards include ARC grants as well as EWDJT awards. After selecting the state and grant program of interest, awards for the years selected will be displayed. Drill down by selecting a specific grant award. The screening tool will connect users to the fact sheet associated with the award. In many cases for ARC grants, information provided also includes contact information with phone numbers. While the Grant Fact Sheet search tool does not include new applicants who have never previously applied for an ARC proposal, it will provide valuable guidance on when to begin your search.

Below is an example search for a cleanup grant in the Town of Robbins, NC.

- Go to https://cfpub.epa.gov/bf_factsheets/index.cfm.
- Using the filters on the left, sort/search for specific grant fact sheets.
- Check the boxes for "Cleanup Grants," "State of NC," and "All Years."
- The fact sheet for a cleanup grant, with contact information, in the town of Robbins, NC. Next step—Schedule a meeting and discuss information sharing and grant submission ideas.
- Grant Recipient: Town of Robbins, NC
910.948.2431
- Cleanup Grants
\$400,000 for hazardous substances

EPA has selected the Town of Robbins for two Brownfields cleanup grants. Hazardous substances grant funds will be used to clean up the Northern Parcel of the former Robbins Mill at 200 South Kennedy Street, and the Southern Parcel of the former Robbins Mill at 100 South Kennedy Street. The Robbins Mill property originally was developed and used as a woolen textile mill. Both parcels are contaminated with polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and metals. Grant funds at both sites also will be used to conduct community outreach activities.

4. WEBINARS

EPA webinars

EPA National Assessment and Cleanup Guidelines Outreach Webinar

Thursday, October 5, 2017, 1:30 p.m. ET

No registration is necessary.

Link to Webinar: <http://epawebconferencing.acms.com/app18/>

Audio dial-in: 866.299.3188—Conference Code: 202 566 1817#

Finding and Applying for EPA Grants

Tuesday October 10, 2017, 2-3 p.m. ET

No registration is necessary.

Link to Webinar: <http://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-grants-award-process-webinars>

EPA's Office of Grants and Debarment will be hosting another Grants Award Process Webinar for EPA applicants and recipients. This is a high level webinar that covers topics related to finding and applying for grants, as well as the basics of managing an award. The webinar will be recorded.

The First-Timers Guide to the 2017 National Brownfields Training Conference

November 15, 2017, 1-2 p.m. ET

Register online at <https://clu-in.org/conf/tio/FirstTimeBrownfields/>.

New to the National Brownfields Training Conference? There is no reason to feel lost during your first conference experience. The 2017 National Brownfields Training Conference is rich in opportunities to learn about Brownfields and community revitalization opportunities. Learn how to use the conference to network, share information, secure partners, market properties, and learn best practices. This 60-minute webinar will feature experienced Brownfields professionals who will explain why they keep coming back to the Brownfields Conference. The webinar will feature perspectives from representatives from government, nonprofits, and consultants who will share tips about how to make the most out of your first experience at the National Brownfields Training Conference.

TAB webinars

TAB EZ Grant Writing Tool & Tips for EPA Assessment and Cleanup Proposals

Tuesday, October 3, 2017, 12:30 p.m. ET

Register online at www.ksutab.org/education/webinars.

After your registration has been received, a confirmation email will be sent which will include the webinar connection information. You will need a KSU TAB account to register. New users who have not previously set up an account can do so by clicking the "[Get a free account](#)" link in the upper right hand side of Kansas State University's [TAB website](#). If you have questions, please contact Sheree Walsh, chsr@ksu.edu, 785.532.6519. Space is limited, so register soon.

NALGEP Tips for Successful Brownfields Grant Proposals

Tuesday, October 17, 2017, 2:00 p.m. ET

Register online at

<https://njit.webex.com/njit/onstage/g.php?MTID=ec7a5086bb28188ff852e92f52e9dce00>.

Join the webinar to hear from the nation's top Brownfields experts to learn key tricks of the trade as you prepare your FY 2018 grant application.

5. MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS

Fall is the season for local and regional Brownfields conferences. Local conferences provide a great opportunity to network with employers, meet government officials, and seek out supporters and potential partners. Often registration fees can be waived for grantee staff and students. However, it is important that conference organizers be contacted directly for special assistance and waiver of fees. Here are a few upcoming conferences.

Local and regional Brownfields associations

20th Anniversary of Florida's Brownfield Program—Embracing Florida's Past, Enhancing Florida's Future

October 1–4, 2017

The Renaissance Vinoy, St. Petersburg, FL

Hosted by the Florida Brownfields Association and its members, this conference offers a great opportunity to network and share expertise with a unique group of stakeholders with an interest in Florida Brownfields redevelopment. Registration including signing up for sponsorship and exhibit space is now open online. For more details of the celebration of 20 years of the Brownfields program in Florida, visit their [website](#).

Green Infrastructure & Brownfields Bootcamp

Friday, October 20, 2017

Allenstown, New Hampshire

NJIT TAB will be hosting a Green Infrastructure and Brownfields Bootcamp where they will be teaching communities how to integrate green technology into their stormwater planning. There will be hands-on activities to further solidify the importance of green technology on Brownfield sites. Visit their [website](#) for more information.

2017 Southeast Brownfields Workshop

November 7–9, 2017

Georgia Tech Research Institute Conference Center, Atlanta, GA

EPA Region 4 and the Georgia Brownfield Association are hosting the 2017 Southeast Brownfields Workshop on November 7–9, 2017. More than 200 attendees, including grantees, state environmental agencies, tribes, urban and rural local governments, nonprofit organizations, environmental professionals, and community members are expected to attend this year's event. Visit their [website](#) for more information.

EPA Regional and ICMA national conferences

2017 National Brownfields Training Conference

December 5–7, 2017

Pittsburgh, PA

The session selection process is complete. Brownfields 2017 is set to offer attendees a robust and expansive conference experience. This year's conference programming and speakers will engage attendees on topics at the forefront of today's Brownfields and economic development landscapes, challenging both emerging and seasoned professionals as well as a diverse range of Brownfields stakeholders to think outside the norms when addressing land revitalization and redevelopment. For more information and to register, visit their [website](#).

6. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE—TAB, NIEHS, HMTRI

Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB)

The TAB program is supported by three grantees. While HMTRI works with communities interested in establishing job training programs, the three TAB grantees are charged with assisting communities with their ARC programs. TAB grantees provide free technical assistance to state, regional, county, Tribal, and local government entities and nonprofit organizations interested in learning about, identifying, assessing, cleaning up, and redeveloping Brownfield sites. Types of assistance provided by TAB organizations include:

- Guidance on funding opportunities
- Explain laws and regulations
- Navigate regulatory programs
- Consultant procurement (review of draft RFPs, creation of evaluation criteria, consultant selection)
- Review and critique grant applications
- Interpretation of technical and scientific reports and data (such as site characterization results)
- Development of strategic plans
- Development of community specific site evaluation and prioritization processes
- Development of Corridor Assets and Needs Plans
- Development of Site Redevelopment Vision Plans
- Explain cleanup technologies
- Design and conduct community engagement activities
- Provide educational workshops such as Brownfields 101
- Provide seminars, webinars, and boot camps on specific Brownfield-related topics
- Provide community planning and visioning workshops
- Provide feasibility studies
- Strategic planning and execution
- Site selection, project design, and management
- Environmental site assessment, due diligence, and reporting
- Environmental planning and management
- Remedial action planning
- Financial resources and liability insurance
- Regulatory facilitation
- Risk management
- Community involvement

The Kansas State University (KSU) TAB program, for example, will provide examples of successful grant proposals. Go to the [KSU TAB website](#) for example job training proposals. [KSU](#) provides TAB services in EPA regions, 5, 6, 7, and 8.

The [New Jersey institute of Technology \(NJIT\)](#) provides TAB services in EPA regions 1, 3, and 4.

The [Center for Creative Land Recycling \(CCLR\)](#) provides TAB services in EPA regions 2, 9, and 10.

For more information on the EPA TAB program, visit the [EPA website](#).

NIEHS post-disaster website

The NIEHS Worker Training Program (WTP) and its awardees have been actively involved in hurricane and flood response and cleanup activities, including those related to Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and Hurricane Sandy in 2012. The resources are aimed at protecting the health and safety of those responding to the [aftermath of a hurricane or a flood](#), including emergency responders, skilled support personnel, homeowners, and business owners. For a list of resources applicable to a variety of natural and man-made disasters, please visit their [All-Hazards Resources](#) page.

HMTRI Website

HMTRI, under cooperative agreement with EPA, provides technical assistance to communities and organizations interested in developing and sustaining EWDJT programs. The [Brownfields Toolbox](#) website is the HMTRI repository for all things related to environmental workforce. Below are a few topic areas that can be found on our website.

- [PLC post-session notes and audio recordings](#)
- [Start a program](#)
- [Social media directory](#)
- [Certified Employee Finder](#)
- [Resources from past Environmental Job Development All-Grantee meetings](#)
- [CONNECT News archive](#)

7. TUNE IN TO THE NEXT PLC

The schedule for the remaining sessions in PLC Cycle 17 is below.

- PLC #8—October 11
- PLC #9—October 25
- PLC #10—November 8

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Next PLC Session: October 11, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. ET
319.527.3513, access code 550105#
Please call in five minutes early.

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



Visit our [HMTRI Brownfields Toolbox](#) website for more information on Brownfields Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training programs. All [PLC session notes and recordings](#) are also located on the website. For those interested in providing content or suggestions, please contact Glo Hanne at ghanne@eicc.edu.

NOTE: The PLC brings together ideas and opinions of individuals interested in environmental workforce development and job training. Ideas and opinions are not those of EPA or its policy and should not be taken as official guidance.