

November 8, 2017



Notes from the Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)—Cycle 17, Session 10

This series of bi-weekly phone calls examines effective Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (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
 3. EPA's webinar highlights and insights—Summary of yesterday's informational webinar
 4. Hints and tips in preparing FY2018 EWDJT proposals—Critical issues in proposal development
 5. Webinars
 6. Technical Assistance
 7. 2017 National Brownfields Training Conference
 8. Instructor Training
 9. "Shout Outs"—Congratulations for 100% graduate placement
 10. Job Opportunities
 11. EPA Regional Job Training Coordinators
 12. Tune in to the next PLC

1. NEWS FROM WASHINGTON AND HMTRI

As we are all aware, the FY2018 EWDJT grant guidelines have been posted. The proposal submission deadline is December 15, 2017. All proposals must be submitted through [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). EPA regional coordinators appear at the end of these post-session notes. While regional coordinators cannot answer questions about specific proposals, they can clarify questions regarding the RFP.

Below are links to the RFP, tips, and FAQs.

[FY2018 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grant Guidelines](#)

[FY2018 Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Grants.gov Tip Sheet for Applicants](#)

The PowerPoint that EPA used during their webinar on November 7 is located [here](#).

HMTRI will have a booth in the exhibit hall at Brownfields 2017 in Pittsburg, PA. Bring your program literature to the conference and use our booth as your home base. Our booth number is #506. We will also be facilitating a roundtable session on Wednesday, December 6, from 1:45–2:45 p.m. in room 401.

Part of the session will address FY2017 EWDJT proposals with a last minute checklist and discussion. Details of the roundtable session are as follows:

Session Code 107108

Track 5—Community Engagement and Environmental Justice

Employing Community Residents through Training and Certification

2. QUESTIONS FROM PLC MEMBERS

If you have questions you would like addressed, send them to Glo Hanne at ghanne@eicc.edu.

As part of the threshold requirements, we are to make sure that we are not duplicating other federally funded environmental job training programs in our community. Where can I find out about other training programs?

The HMTRI [Brownfields Toolbox](#) website provides a [map](#) locating past and present EWDJT grantees. If you identify another program in your community, it is necessary to contact them to ensure you are not addressing the same target community and participant group.

Other sources regarding environmental training programs include:

- [Cleanups in my Community](#)
- [EPA Factsheets](#)
- [Environmental Career Worker Training Program](#)

Perhaps the best source of information can be found locally at city hall. Offices of community development, training and employment, or environment should be aware of federal training programs in the area. If a similar program exists, it will be necessary to indicate how your program addresses a different community or target group.

3. EPA'S WEBINAR HIGHLIGHTS AND INSIGHTS

[EPA's webinar PowerPoint presentation](#) on November 7 was an excellent summary of the FY2018 EWDJT Request for Proposals (RFP). The slides provide a condensed review of the RFP and are self-explanatory.

Allowable costs for core offerings

Questions always arise over allowable costs. The RFP provides a detailed list of allowable and disallowed costs. In general, if the activity is directly related to train and place participants in one of the categories listed, it becomes an allowable cost. Of concern, however, is the allocation of funding within those categories.

The only required training is OSHA 29 CFR 1910.120 40-hour HAZWOPER. Many grantees also choose to offer OSHA 10-hour training with an emphasis on worker health and safety. Keep in mind specific construction and life skills training are not supported by EWDJT funds.

The EWDJT program primarily supports Brownfields hazardous waste training. However, grantees may choose to deliver a variety of environmental training and offer certificates based on employer needs in their targeted community.

Advanced courses can be funded, but keep in mind that if those advanced courses fall in a category with limited funds, the EPA may not be able to fund that course in its entirety depending on the available amount of funding. Applicants should take this into consideration when they decide the types of training they will offer and at what level it will be delivered. Applicants will not have the ability to materially revise their proposals, substitute, or alter their training curricula if the proposal is selected for funding and certain types of training are unable to be funded.

Applicants have the option to deliver training listed below at awareness, intermediate, or advanced levels. The total funding available to the EWDJT program is itemized below. For example, air programs have chosen not to contribute funds to the EWDJT program. As a result, EPA would not likely fund an advanced course in air monitoring unless it involved cleanup of hazardous pollutants.

Contributions available to fund environmental training are in various categories.

- Brownfields hazardous waste assessment and cleanup training, including petroleum cleanup training: \$2,865,000
- Solid waste management or cleanup training: \$10,000
- Superfund site cleanup and innovative and alternative treatment technologies training: \$25,000
- Wastewater treatment training: \$40,000
- Emergency planning, preparedness, and response training: \$20,000
- Enhanced environmental health and safety training: \$15,000
- Integrated pest management (IPM) training: \$10,000
- Alternative energy technologies (e.g. solar installation training, training in the preparation of formerly contaminated sites for renewable energy purposes, etc.): \$15,000

It should be noted that the above categories are general in nature and that many courses and certificates will fit under one or several of the categories. Page 4 of the RFP provides detail into specific training that fits under one or more of the above mentioned categories.

A note to those who may be discouraged after attending the EPA webinar

Some of the applicants participating in this cycle have been funded in the past, some several times with a deep understanding of their community, partners, and stakeholders. Other applicants have been

working on their proposal for many months, and have attended the Annual All-Grantee Meeting and PLC sessions during the year. Additional applicants have been rejected in the past, resolved issues, and improved their program plan. For some, the EWDJT program is a new adventure. They find themselves overwhelmed and discouraged about submitting a proposal.

Here are some thoughts to consider.

1. Submit a proposal no matter what, and give it your best shot.
2. All proposals are evaluated on a level playing field. Awards will be made on the quality of the proposed plan and an understanding of program goals with no favoritism.
3. Unfunded proposals can provide a launching pad for improved and successful programs during the next funding cycle.
4. EWDJT programs can become a permanent part of the community—with diverse community support.
5. Do not be discouraged if the program appears difficult to organize at first.
6. Grantees are often surprised by the amount of external support available to EWDJT programs.
7. Local external support will not be forthcoming to those who do not have a positive attitude.

Hopefully the proposal will be funded. But with stiff competition, it may not be this year. In the event EPA support does not come this year, planning continues. A new funding cycle of EWDJT will begin again in the fall and preparation should continue. EWDJT programs have been surprised to find local funding and support, even when federal assistance is not immediately available.

4. HINTS AND TIPS IN PREPARING FY2018 EWDJT PROPOSALS—CRITICAL ISSUES IN PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT

Deconstructing and responding to the RFP

After reviewing webinar PowerPoint slides and the FAQs, we suggest deconstructing the RFP to ensure that every request for information is addressed in the proposal. Failure to address even one question can be the difference in a funded or unfunded proposal.

1. Establish a team of individuals to be active in proposal development.
2. Select a project coordinator to be the enforcer and general editor, working closely with the grant writer.
3. Make sure the grant writer is familiar with the project and has read the RFP in detail.
4. Deconstruct and identify every question and request for information presented in the RFP.
5. Assign every question and every request for information to the individual best qualified to respond.
6. Establish milestones, meetings, and deadline schedules for each team member. Work backwards from December 15.
7. Obtain firm time commitments from each team member regarding his or her deliverable.

8. Allow for delays and an early completion date as the proposal is developed.
9. On a regular basis, present deliverables to the entire team for peer-to-peer review and revision.
10. It is the project coordinator's responsibility to ensure all criteria have been adequately addressed.

Outreach and data gathering issues that require considerable time and effort

In previous PLC sessions, we have discussed issues that are critical in order to submit the proposal to grants.gov. We have also discussed outreach and data gathering issues that require considerable time and effort.

- Personal contact with community governmental, non-governmental, and faith-based stakeholders.
- Personal contact with potential employers, seeking guidance and support including commitments to look at program graduates; and participate as advisors, guest speakers, and program advocates.
- Personal contact with city government, identifying Brownfields stakeholders and supporters.
- Meeting with city council members potentially impacted by the EWDJT program.
- To properly demonstrate that the EWDJT program is truly part of the community, someone or several team members need to be in the field collecting data and developing relationships.

If the seven ranking criteria were ordered by the effort and time it takes to respond properly, that order might look something like the list below. Some of the criteria overlap such as labor market assessments, leveraging, and community and employer partnerships and can be done simultaneously.

1. Community Need—20 points—Community and labor market assessments
2. Leveraging—3 points—Life skills, student services, and non-funded EWDJT activities
3. Community and Employer Partnerships—26 points—Employer involvement, public meetings, and working with ARC grantees
4. Training Program Description—10 points—Curriculum (note allowable funding levels)
5. Program Structure, Anticipated Outputs, and Outcomes—15 points—Outcomes, recruitment, support, and sustainability
6. Programmatic Capability—20 points—Management systems, experience, past performance, and audits
7. Budget—6 points—Ensure all numbers are consistent across the proposal

The first three criteria represent almost half of the total evaluation points and will take the largest effort and time. It is essential that immediate attention be given to activities that involve partnerships, outreach, and relationships with potential stakeholders.

Updated project timeline and schedule

Based on previous years, an estimated timetable for submitting proposals, receiving funding and notifications, and finalizing work plans is below. It provides a rough idea of the EWDJT award process when talking with potential partners.

- Next PLC—November 29, 2:00 p.m. ET—Landmines to avoid when developing EWDJT proposals
- National Brownfields Conference—December 5–7, 2017
- PLC session at National Brownfields Conference—December 6, 1:45 p.m., room 401—Last minute proposal checklist
- Proposals due in grant.gov—December 15, 2017
- Rejections for not meeting threshold criteria—First or second week of January 2018
- Awards announced—April/May 2018
- Award letter and acceptance by applicant—May/June 2018—Funds may be spent up to 90 days before final paperwork after official acceptance.
- Terms and conditions with approved work plans—July/August 2018
- HMTRI Annual All-Grantee Meeting—August 8–9, 2018
- Official notice that funds are available for spending—August/September 2018
- Training and execution of work plans including quarterly and ACRES reports—September and ongoing
- FY2019 EWDJT RFP—Late fall 2018

Important things to do ASAP while there is still time

Check and verify that your grant submission process is current. For those who have not applied for a federal grant or need to be updated, it is important to go to Grants.gov for information and a tutorial. We suggest a “dry run” even if the account has been used in the past. Applicants must use their accounts at least once per year to remain active.

To check an account status, go to www.SAM.gov and enter the organization’s DUNS number. Make sure your password is up to date. If you need guidance, call the help desk for assistance at 1.800.518.4726.

For those who have not applied for a federal grant or need to be updated, it is important to go to Grants.gov for information and a tutorial. If starting from the beginning, this entire process could take as long as a month to complete.

Applications have been rejected for the reasons listed below.

- Applicant’s www.SAM.gov account is inactive.
- Applicants use the wrong DUNS number.
- The submitter is not the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR).

Meet with governmental and community organizations including the EPA regional job training coordinator

Additional announcements of intentions should be made to community organizations and local government including city council and in public forums. These announcements are intentions—not commitments. Local announcements will assist in developing relationships with community stakeholders and potential leveraging partners.

EWDJT applicants are strongly urged to hold public meetings even though it was is not formally written into the RFP. To supercharge the EWDJT application, prospective grantees should hold public meetings, especially in target communities with an opportunity for public comment. ARC grantees were required to do this, but their deadline was November 2. We suggest the contacts below as approaches for community involvement.

- Work with faith-based organizations and local churches in the target community to present intentions to organize an EWDJT program.
- Contact community organizations to present EWDJT intentions at their next meeting.
- Contact city hall to coordinate with city council and community and neighborhood development announcing EWDJT intentions.
- In every case, document meetings and include in the proposal.

Contact the EPA regional job training coordinator to indicate an intention to submit a proposal. See the regional coordinator list later in these post-session notes. EPA regional job training coordinators are primary contact points for applicants, and can be helpful in answering specific questions regarding the EWDJT solicitation. Some regions may have special conference calls for prospective applicants in their region. Get on the list to be notified. Remember, since the RFP release, they can only clarify RFP contents and questions.

5. WEBINARS

Best Practices for Leveraging Federal Funds

Wednesday, November 15, 2017, 2:00–3:00 p.m. ET

The EPA's Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) provides funding and technical assistance to local, tribal, and community-based organizations working with communities facing disproportionate environmental and public health burdens. In anticipation of the release of the RFP for OEJ's Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS) Cooperative Agreement program, hear directly from two CPS grantees about their best practices and success with the program. Learn how Partners for a Healthier Community (Springfield, MA) and Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition (Seattle, WA) accessed the larger CPS funding opportunity by strategically developing projects that leveraged smaller funds from other EPA grant programs.

Upon [registration](#), you will be emailed with information on how to access the webinar.

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

November 15, 2017, 1:00–2:00 pm 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.

6. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

[Cleanups in My Community](#)

Cleanups in My Community enables you to map and list hazardous waste cleanup locations and grant areas, and drill down to details about those cleanups and grants and other, related information.

[Brownfields Toolbox website](#)

EPA documents including RFP guidelines, PLC post-session notes and audio recordings, and much more about environmental workforce development programs are available on HMTRI's Brownfields Toolbox website. Visitors to the website may want to also look at the Start a Program section. Click on the Start a Program tab along the top on the homepage. Many components are updated regularly, so check back often.

HMTRI Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)

If you are not on the PLC distribution list, you may want to join. Participants on the list receive session reminders and post-session notes before they are posted to the Brownfields Toolbox website. To be included on the PLC participant list, contact Glo Hanne at ghanne@eicc.edu.

Successful FY2017 EWDJT grant proposals

[KSU](#) and [NJIT](#) Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) programs primarily provide technical assistance to ARC grantees. Their resources are also useful to EWDJT applicants. On their websites, there are a few EWDJT grant proposals from past years that may be of interest.

7. 2017 NATIONAL BROWNFIELDS TRAINING CONFERENCE

December 5–7, 2017

Pittsburgh, PA

With the session selection process completed, [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. Visit their website for more information. Please remember to [register](#) and reserve your [housing](#). Housing via the conference website, which provides negotiated rates, closes November 6.

Plan to attend the HMTRI roundtable.

Employing Community Residents through Training and Certification

December 6, 1:45–2:45 pm ET

Room 401/402

Track 5: Community Engagement and Environmental Justice

Training and certification programs for residents can create pathways to local remediation jobs. If a decision is made to move forward, when, where, and how should governmental and nonprofit organizations proceed? This session will offer an opportunity for an informal discussion on the feasibility of providing environmental training to community residents.

HMTRI will have a booth in the exhibit hall. Bring your program literature to the conference and use our booth as a home base. Our booth number is #506.

Join the National Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) Team.

Office Hours: Tea & Sympathy (& Food For Your Thoughts)

Come share your redevelopment ideas, grab some lunch, and discuss your Brownfields questions, one-on-one, with nationally-recognized TAB experts. EPA's TAB program provides FREE, broad-reaching assistance to guide communities, local governments, and tribes with planning, environmental, and re-development aspects of Brownfields.

Please RSVP by November 17 by registering at

<https://www.ksutab.org/education/workshops/details?id=274>. Walk-ins are welcome, but you will need to register by November 17 to receive lunch.

8. INSTRUCTOR TRAINING

Disaster Site Response Institute for Trainers (Five-day training program)

January 8-12, 2018

Indian River State College, Treasure Coast Public Safety Training Complex

Fort Pierce, FL

Hosted by the National Partnership for Environmental Technology Education (NPETE), participants will be prepared through a five-day program to obtain safety authorizations for public and private disaster site responders and workers. Courses include OSHA's 15-hour Disaster Site Worker, Hazardous Awareness and Communications, and Incident Command. Accepted attendees will receive approximately 85 percent of their travel costs for attending. The training is being supported with funding from the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS). OSHA's Disaster Site Worker Outreach Training Program provides necessary training to workers who provide skilled support (e.g. utility, demolition, debris removal, or heavy equipment operation) or clean-up services in response to natural and/or man-made disasters. All workers at disaster sites need to be aware of the differences between disaster sites and regular construction or demolition worksites. They must also be able to inspect, don, and doff air-purifying respirators.

Upon successful completion of the course, participants will receive an OSHA Disaster Site Worker card (not the OSHA Disaster Site Worker Train-the-Trainer authorization). Completion of the 10- or 30-hour OSHA Construction or General Industry Outreach Training Program is a prerequisite. Being a current OSHA outreach trainer for General Industry or Construction will also be accepted. Applicants must provide a copy of their 10/30 or current trainer card with their application. The deadline for completing the application is November 8, 2017. Candidates will be notified by November 15, 2017, if they have been accepted. For more information or an application form, contact Patti Thompson at 319.721.1509 or pattijthompson@gmail.com.

9. "SHOUT OUTS"—CONGRATULATIONS FOR 100% GRADUATE PLACEMENT

Future Build, Pittsburg, CA

Future Build received calls from two long-time employment partners—Aerotek and CLP Construction—for HAZWOPER certificate holders for remediation laborers in the cleanup efforts for the Sonoma County areas ravaged by the recent fires. 95 percent of their trainees were hired. The Future Build graduates are staying in Santa Rosa and will not be available for graduation.

RichmondBUILD Academy, Richmond, CA

It's always been a goal of EWDJT staff to have 100% placement by or before graduation. With the recent events in the North Bay area, direct entry into the Carpenters and Plumbers & Steamfitters Unions and

EPA-funded HAZWOPER 40 classes, RichmondBUILD achieved their goal. Thus, they will not have a graduation ceremony on November 17.

LA Conservation Corps, Los Angeles, CA

The LA Conservation Corps graduated a class of 15 participants on October 18, 2017. All participants completed an intensive 6-week training provided by Heat & Frost Insulators Union. All 15 graduates are employed after graduation. The LA Conservation Corps strives to secure employment for participants before or right after graduation. They achieved 100 percent placement with their current cohort.

10. JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Environmental Staffing

Looking for Health and Safety professionals for two–five months in Napa Valley, CA. Call or email Dwayne at Environmental Staffing, 704.529.6707, option 1 or dwayne@environmentalstaffing.com.

11. EPA REGIONAL JOB TRAINING COORDINATORS

EPA Region 1 Danny Rodriguez	CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT	Phone: (617) 918-1060 E-mail: rodriguez.danny@epa.gov
EPA Region 2 Schenine Mitchell	NJ, NY, PR, VI	Phone: (212) 637-3283 E-mail: mitchell.schenine@epa.gov
EPA Region 3 Jeff Barnett	DE, DC, MD, PA, VA, WV	Phone: (215) 814-3246 E-mail: barnett.jeff@epa.gov
EPA Region 4 Bushra Jawaid	AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN	Phone: (404) 562-8569 E-mail: jawaid.bushra@epa.gov
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EPA Region 9		Phone: (213) 244-1821

Noemi Emeric-Ford		E-mail: emeric-ford.noemi@epa.gov
EPA Region 10 Robert Tan	AK, ID, OR, WA	Phone: (206) 553-2580 E-mail: tan.robert@epa.gov

12. TUNE IN TO THE NEXT PLC

Although this PLC session ended Cycle 17, two additional PLC sessions will be held:

November 29, 2017—Landmines to avoid when developing EWDJT proposals

December 6, 2017—Held at Brownfields 2017—A last minute checklist and discussion of the FY17 EWDJT RFP

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Next PLC Session: November 29, 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.