

Notes from the Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)—Cycle 21, Session 1.

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. PLC questions
- 3. Things to do now
- 4. Technical assistance from the Hazardous Materials Training and Research Institute (HMTRI)
- 5. Webinars and presentation power points
- 6. Training and professional development opportunities
- 7. Brownfield conferences, workshops, and meetings
- 8. Funding and leveraging opportunities
- 9. Check in with EPA Regional Coordinators
- 10. Join us on future Professional Learning Community calls

1. NEWS FROM WASHINGTON AND HMTRI

EPA Happenings

2019 National Brownfields Training Conference

December 11-13, 2019

Pre-conference programming on December 10

Los Angeles Convention Center, Los Angeles CA

Brownfields 2019 is cosponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). Offered every two years, the conference is the largest gathering of stakeholders focused on cleaning up and reusing formerly utilized commercial and industrial properties.

Funding announcements for FY20 EWDJT grants

As we have discussed, the schedule for EWDJT grant awards has been revised from previous years. This cycle of EWDJT grantee funding will come from the EPA Federal Fiscal year 2020 budget, which begins October 1, 2019. As a result, funding announcements cannot be made before October and will most likely be made in November. This year, twenty awards will be divided among first, second, and third year grantees in addition to new startup programs.

HMTRI News:

2019 All Grantee Meeting

In order to reduce grantee expenses, a one day 2019 All-Grantee Meeting will be held as a preconference event in conjunction with the National Brownfields Conference.

The full day All-Grantee Meeting on December 10, 2019 will allow newly funded grantees to attend, reduce travel costs for all, and allow for better EPA and employer representation. The revised date

(traditionally held in August) has been met enthusiastically by EPA and grantees with limited travel budgets. HMTRI is in the process of event planning and will provide details as more information becomes available.

EWDJT grantee representation at the 2019 National Brownfield Meeting December 11-13 2019

HMTRI has requested exhibitor space to represent the entire EWDJT grantee community. The goal of the exhibition booth is to develop EWDJT awareness among employers, potential partners and other community stakeholders. We would like to showcase accomplishments success stories and training offered by our grantees. Details for grantee participation will be discussed as we get closer to the conference.

Missed a few of our PLC sessions? Post session notes are available on the <u>brownfields-toolbox.org/plc-sessions/</u>. For questions or to be placed on the PLC register send contact information to hkballou@eicc.edu.

2. PLC QUESTIONS

Can you give an updated timeline for FY20 EWDJT grants?

As previously noted, EPA is now operating on a revised grant cycle from previous years and it can be a little confusing. The timeline for each individual grant will depend on the official award date. A hypothetical schedule based on currently available information might look like the time line presented below. Let us assume a grant is announced in November (they will not be announced before October 1, 2019). The hypothetical grant would extend from the official start date for three years. The first two years are involved in program development and delivery with a final year for additional training, placement, tracking, and program sustainability efforts. The work schedule might look like this:

July-September 2019

- Rejections for not meeting threshold criteria
- Proposal evaluations continue with recommendations for funding

November- December 2019

- Twenty funding awards announced after the new fiscal year begins (likely in November)
- Award letter and acceptance by applicant
- Work plans reviewed and approved
- Terms and Conditions finalized
- Funding authorized
- Official notice that funds are available for spending
- Program planning and preparation for the first cohort under the new grant
- Post award meetings with Advisory Board, partners, instructors, and community stakeholders
- All-Grantee Meeting December 10
- National Brownfields Conference December 11-13

January-March 2020

- Community awareness, program development, and marketing continues
- Quarterly and ACRES reporting due every quarter
- Leveraged services for program participants confirmed
- Recruitment and student assessment for initial training cohorts
- Training begins

April – July 2020

- Community awareness, recruitment, and student assessment continues
- First cohort graduation and placement in full swing
- Quarterly and ACRES reporting due every quarter
- Training continues, curriculum review based on student feedback and assessments

July 2020 – November 2021

- Placement, Community awareness, recruitment, and student assessment continues
- Training continues, revisions to curriculum if necessary
- Annual All-Grantee Meetings with idea exchange, leveraging, and placement opportunities
- Anticipation and preparation for the next EWDJT funding cycle
- Search for additional support and backstop funding for program sustainability

November 2021 - November 2022

- Last year of the grant, training windup placement, tracking
- Continued search for federal and local funding for program expansion

Questions?

Still have unanswered questions during the evaluation phase of your EWDJT proposal? Respond to this email with inquiries or send them to:

3. THINGS TO DO NOW

hkballou@eicc.edu

We call the period from application submission to funding announcement the "long wait". This period, however, is not totally downtime. It is possible that proposal reviewers might contact individuals or organizations noted in the grant application. Evaluators may also seek additional information or clarification of statements presented. For these reasons, it is important to remain current on all aspects of the submitted proposal. A best practice suggested during the long wait is to assume a positive funding decision and continue the following efforts.

Contact newly awarded MAC grantees near your community

EPA has announced 149 communities to receive 151 grants totaling \$64.6 million for Multipurpose, Assessment, and Cleanup (MAC) Grants. MAC grants assess, clean up and redevelop underutilized properties while protecting public health and the environment. Grant funds expand the ability of communities to recycle vacant and abandoned properties for new, productive reuses and provide jobs to locally trained residents. For additional information and MAC grantee locations, check out the following sites.

- View Fact Sheets for FY 2019 Selected MAC Applicants
- FY 2019 List of MAC Applicants Selected for Funding by State (PDF)
- List of All FY 2019 MAC Grant Applicants (PDF)

Post submission housekeeping

Make sure those involved in proposal development, community or labor market assessments, working with key partners, and tracking local development projects remain current on the results of their assessments. Often development projects are delayed or canceled, critically changing the demand for new hires. External events can have a profound impact on the direction, timetable and scope of EWDJT programs. These changes can be addressed and properly mitigated as final work plans are submitted and approved.

Keeping partners engaged

Make sure all potential partners are informed of the grant review process. It is a professional curtesy.

- Continue engagement with the mayor's office, informing administrative and staff assistants of schedules and timelines Networking should continue with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Workforce Investment Board, and other local governmental agencies identified as potential leveraging partners.
- Brief elected representatives on your progress in developing an EWDJT program It is important that they stay informed of the progress of your federal application. Additionally they may open opportunities for additional leveraged resources.
- Continue discussions with local faith-based and nonprofit organizations These are the organizations that will provide in-kind support as the program begins.
- Locate and contact active brownfields It is important that coordination continues between the Multipurpose, Assessment and Cleanup Grantees (MAC). The objective of these relationships has more to do with employment and leveraging opportunities than anything else. Note the recent announcement of 151 new MAC grants.
- Participate in public meetings Continue to attend public meetings. The objective of these meetings is to inform the community and answer questions on the progress of the EWDJT program. Participation in public events will greatly benefit recruitment efforts as the program is implemented.
- Outreach to employers contacted during the labor market assessment and in proposal development It is critical that communications continue with potential employers especially those that may have been identified in the proposal.
- Continue research on the progress of special programs and community development plans that may have been noted as other factors in the grant application Sometimes special programs and community development programs are expanded or may be delayed due to unintended developments.

As a guide, assume that any partner, employer, or organization discussed in the proposal may be contacted by proposal evaluators for confirmation of proposed commitments.

Continue a dialog with program advisors

Hopefully advisory committees were established during proposal development. If not, the long wait before funding approval is a good time to establish a strong team of advisors. Advisory Boards should include individuals influencing all aspects of the EWDJT program including the following:

- Representatives from contributing governmental agencies
- Representatives from target community organizations (nonprofit and faith-based)
- Community residents and influencers
- Potential employers
- Leveraging partners
- Social service providers
- Training providers
- Workforce Investment Board

If an advisory committee has already been established, members should be kept up to date on the progress of the grant application. If a committee has not been formed, it is wise to establish one. The reason for consulting with advisors before the grant is awarded has to do with events that may have occurred that could influence the project work plan. Advisors may also provide insight regarding inquires made by key partners and stakeholder supporters during the evaluation process.

Consultant and contractor follow up

As with advisory committees, the period between grant submission and award is a good time to qualify new contractors and consultants. Development of an RFP, public announcements, and proposal evaluation can take considerable time and lead to delays after funding has been approved. Additionally, many governmental organizations and larger nonprofits have internal rules and procedures that must be followed to quality contractors and consultants. As long as RFPs are conditional on receiving funding and program scheduling, qualifying potential vendors early can save time when funds have been released. For those applicants who already have qualified contractors and consultants, it is a professional curtesy to keep them informed on the progress of the grant.

4. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE HAZARDOUS MATERIALS TRAINING AND RESEARCH INSITUTE (HMTRI)

For those new to the Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Program (EWDJT), we would like to provide some background information about the Professional Learning Community (PLC) and the Hazardous Materials Training and Research Institute (HMTRI). HMTRI has worked with various EPA programs for over 30 years under a variety of cooperative agreements. Grants have included technician training, curriculum development, capacity building, and technical assistance to communities interested in establishing local environmental workforce programs. The current technical assistance effort is funded with a cooperative agreement with EPA. The HMTRI effort has been leveraged with assistance from the Advanced Technology Environmental Education Center (ATEEC) funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Partnership for Environmental Education (PETE) supported by the National Institute of Environmental Health science (NIEHS), and Eastern Iowa Community College (EICC).

Since the beginning of EPA's environmental workforce development program, HMTRI has assisted communities establish, deliver, and sustain quality environmental training to community residents. Here are some of the strategies HMTRI uses to engage and support the EWDJT effort:

- **Brownfields-Toolbox.org** A website and repository for all things related to workforce development and job training. (http://brownfields-toolbox.org/)
- Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meetings Networking grantees for peer to peer idea exchange held each year after new grantees have been selected (https://brownfields-toolbox.org/all-grantee-meetings/)
- Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Update Webinar— Updating communities on the latest developments and best practices of successful EWDJT programs (https://brownfields-toolbox.org/webinars/)
- CONNECT News, a bimonthly e-publication CONNECT is HMTRI's acronym for Community support, networking, and assistance for environmental career training. Each issue of CONNECT News features contentious issues faced by EWDJT programs (http://brownfields-toolbox.org/newsletter-archive/)
- Grantee and Community Outreach Listserv— The HMTRI listserv is a communications link for current announcements and request for information regarding environmental training and job development (email hkballou@eicc.edu to be included in the listserv)
- Grantee Scans (The Certified Employee Finder) Collecting and sharing EWDJT information regarding program competencies, training schedules, and graduate certifications with potential employers and other grantees (https://brownfields-toolbox.org/certified-employee-finder/)
- EWDJT Social Media Directory Grantee websites, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube social platforms are linked for easy navigating (https://brownfields-toolbox.org/social-media-directory/)

- Best Practices Guide A compilation of best practices and strategies from successful EWDJT programs (http://s3-us-east-2.amazonaws.com/bf-toolbox/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/19162438/BP toolbox report formatted 20180411 onlineversion w cc.pdf)
- Environmental Workforce Development Professional Learning Community (PLC) Biweekly informal conference calls featuring successful grantees and discussions on EWDJT topics of interest (https://brownfields-toolbox.org/plc-sessions/)
- Individualized Technical Assistance one on one assistance regarding EWDJT issues.

Visitors to the brownfields toolbox may want to also look at the Start a Program section. Click on the Start a Program tab along the top. Many components regularly updated, so check back often.

Participate in HMTRI's Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)

The objective of the PLC is to promote and share innovative strategies among brownfields job training communities and provide assistance to new communities interested in developing environmental job training programs.

PLC calls feature informal 30 minute discussions with EPA Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) grantees, alumni, and new interested stakeholders. Participants highlight their programs and provide an opportunity for others to learn from their experience. It also gives those interested an opportunity to discuss critical issues faced by prospective, new and experienced grantees.

PLC sessions include news from Washington, helpful hints, and an idea exchange. There is no cost or obligation to participate in PLC calls. We ask participants to join us when they can, ask questions and stay in touch. If you are not on the PLC distribution list, email your contact information to hkballou@eicc.edu). Participants on the list receive post-session notes for each session before they are posted to the toolbox.

5. WEBINARS AND PRESENTATION POWERPOINTS

<u>Application of Environmental Justice to State Environmental Impact Assessment</u>

July 23, 2019

2:00 - 3:30 PM ET

Participant conference line: (888) 273-3506, conference ID: 5894926

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has launched a training webinar series to build the capacity of environmental justice practitioners working at the state level. The fourth webinar on "Application of Environmental Justice to State Environmental Impact Assessment" is now open for registration. This webinar will provide a basic primer on environmental justice methodologies which can be used by state practitioners during National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review and other environmental impact assessments. It will also build on this foundation with presentations regarding the State of Alaska's efforts to address health issues in environmental impact assessment and the State of Kentucky's efforts to address transportation-related community impacts. Registration is required. Registered participants will receive details on how to access the webinar when you register. For more information, please visit https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice. For questions about the series, please contact Charles Lee at lee.charles@epa.gov

NIEHS Presentations available

Workplace Stress and Addiction Workshop

The presentations are available from the Exploring Workplace Training Interventions Addressing Workplace Stress and Addiction Workshop and the NIEHS WTP Awardee Meeting, which took place on

May 14-16 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. WTP Awardee United Steelworkers Tony Mazzocchi Center for Health, Safety and Environmental Education hosted the workshop. The meeting brought awardees together to provide program updates, exchange information regarding training, and discover new areas of interest to awardees.

TechDirect

TechDirect, prefers to concentrate mainly on new documents and the Internet live events. However, we do support an area on CLU-IN where announcement of conferences and courses can be regularly posted. We invite sponsors to input information on their events at https://clu-in.org/courses. Likewise, readers may visit this area for news of upcoming events that might be of interest. It allows users to search events by location, topic, time period, etc. If you have any questions regarding TechDirect, contact Jean Balent at balent.jean@epa.gov.

6. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

ACRES training for EWDJT grantees

Tuesday, September 10, 2019

1 p.m. Eastern Time

EPA will offer the following online training to aid Brownfields Cooperative Agreement Recipients in reporting their grant-funded activities using ACRES. To join the session there is no need to pre—register for training, however it is recommended that you <u>test your computer</u> to ensure compatibility prior to the training. On the day of training, follow the instructions below (you will need to join BOTH a conference call and a virtual meeting):

Phone: Dial 1 (408) 650-3123

Phone: Enter the conference code 958-346-757

Phone: the Audio Pin is not needed

WebEx Session EXIT

Click the Join Meeting link next to the training you would like to attend, enter the meeting

password: ACRES

Environmental Education Webinars

Check out upcoming and archived webinar series for environmental educators.

Topics include school recycling programs, teaching outdoors, farm-to-school programs, and more.

7. BROWNFIELD CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS, AND MEETINGS

2019 Virginia Brownfields & Resilience Summit

July 24-25, 2019

Norfolk, VA

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality is teaming up with the City of Norfolk and their Office of Resilience to bring you the 2019 Virginia Brownfields & Resilience Summit. This day and half event will be hosted at the beautiful Slover Library in downtown Norfolk, Virginia. An all-star lineup of speakers is coming together to help facilitate the redevelopment of Brownfields, Brightfields, and Bluefields across Virginia and beyond. This conference will sell out fast, so act now to make sure you are on the list

Annual Georgia Environmental Conference

Jekyll Island

August 21-23, 2019

In its 14th year, the <u>Annual Georgia Environmental Conference</u> is the state's largest, most comprehensive, and diverse educational opportunity for environmental professionals in Georgia and the Southeast region.

2019 West Virginia Brownfields Conference

September 10-12, 2019

Morgantown, WV

The WV Brownfields Conference & Main Street/ON TRAC Training is West Virginia's premier redevelopment event that combines educational programs with networking opportunities between communities, local governments, development professionals, and service providers. The conference features expert panels, interactive workshops, technical training, and project case studies.

The Conference Planning Committee is currently seeking mobile workshop and breakout session ideas to fill limited slots for the 2019 Conference in Morgantown, WV on September 10-12. We are looking for session ideas focused on downtown development, remediation and site preparation strategies, re-use planning approaches, and redevelopment funding opportunities. Creative session formats, such as town hall or roundtable discussions and interactive workshops, as well as traditional panel presentations, are encouraged.

2019 Alabama Brownfields Conference

September 26, 2019 808 20th Street South Birmingham, Alabama

The 2019 Alabama Brownfields Conference will be held on September 25th & 26th at the newly renovated Hilton Birmingham at UAB in the heart of Birmingham's resurgent Southside. Stay tuned for registration and sponsorship opportunities. For more information see the events tab on the webpage below.

2019 Southeast Brownfields Conference

October 27-30, 2019 DoubleTree Universal Orlando Orlando, Florida

As the region's premiere brownfields conference, this is your opportunity to learn more about local brownfields redevelopment programs. The event will comprise presentations on managing redevelopment initiatives, obtaining project funding, successes and lessons learned, and more. Build your network of colleagues and peers. Learn from others and share your ideas. Make plans to join us for another great event. Abstracts will be accepted until June 14, 2019. Please submit all abstracts to FBASE2019@terracon.com. NJIT will be in attendance and available to any community looking to get FREE one-on-one technical assistance!

8. FUNDING AND SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Groundwork USA Program Funding

Groundwork USA, in partnership with NPS and EPA, is now accepting Letters of Interest from communities wishing to begin the process of applying for Groundwork USA program funding and technical assistance and to join the Groundwork Network. The selected community will be eligible for up to \$200,000 in funding and technical assistance from the National Park Service, US Environmental

Protection Agency, and Groundwork USA to plan, establish, and build the capacity of a Groundwork Trust organization in their community. For complete details on the application and selection process, including eligibility requirements, submission details, and evaluation criteria, <u>download the Call for Letters of Interest</u>. Submissions must be received by July 31, 2019.

Guide to Finding Federal Assistance and Resources for Environmental Justice Efforts

This EPA guide offers general guidance and tips on searching for funding opportunities, as well as information on tools, trainings and other relevant resources that are available to help address community needs. The Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (EJ IWG) includes several federal agencies and White House offices that increase local community capacity to promote and implement innovative and comprehensive solutions to environmental justice issues.

Eileen Fisher -SUPPORTING WOMEN IN ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

"We believe that a future with inclusive, equitable and sustainable systems for all people depends on deepening the connection between women's rights and environmental justice. After extensive research, we have designed a grant program to address the fact that, globally, women and girls are the most vulnerable to climate change and hold the firsthand experience to solve it. Linking these two issues not only feels like a natural next step for our company, it is essential to accelerate progress towards improving the status and rights of women and the health of our planet.

Beginning in 2019, we will award \$200,000 annually in amounts ranging from \$5,000 to \$30,000. Applicants must align with one or more of these key points:

- 1. Increasing women's participation in decision-making. Nonprofits and applicable programs are not required to have an explicit environmental focus, but they must be able to demonstrate how their program creates positive environmental outcomes.
- 2. Training women and girls in climate change adaptation, mitigation and advocacy. Nonprofits and applicable programs must provide women and girls with knowledge, tools and access to contribute to climate change resiliency and/or advocate for improved climate change policies.
- 3. Engaging women in the sustainable economy. Nonprofits and applicable programs must create opportunities for women to pursue livelihoods that elevate them as leaders in environmental solutions while improving their well-being and that of the planet.

Eligibility

Organizations must meet the following criteria to be eligible to apply:

- Be an IRS-recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization*
- Provide direct services
- Address one or more of the above key points
- Program's mission focuses primarily on individuals who identify as female
- Executive leadership reflects the demographics of the program's beneficiaries
- Program has been generated by and/or co-designed with the communities it serves
- Able to provide financial statements for one full year of operations
- Able to complete an application and participate in an interview in English

*While organizations must be IRS-recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofits, there is no geographic restriction on the programs for which they are applying.

9.EPA REGIONAL JOB TRAINING COORDINATORS

EPA Region 1	CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT	Phone: (617) 918-1060
Danny Rodriguez		E-mail: rodriguez.danny@epa.gov
EPA Region 2	NJ, NY, PR, VI	Phone: (212) 637-3283
Schenine Mitchell		E-mail: mitchell.schenine@epa.gov
EPA Region 3	DE, DC, MD, PA, VA, WV	Phone: (215) 814-3406
Gianna Rosati		E-mail: rosati.gianna@epa.gov
EPA Region 4	AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC,	Phone: (404) 562-8682
Wanda Jennings	TN	E-mail: jennings.wanda@epa.gov
EPA Region 5	IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI	Phone: (312) 886-4747
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Alma Moreno Lahm		E-mail: moreno-lahm.alma@epa.gov
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Christina Wilson		E-mail: wilson.christina@epa.gov
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Nova Blazej		E-mail: blazej.nova@epa.gov
EPA Region 9		Phone: (213) 244-1821
Noemi Emeric-Ford		E-mail: emeric-ford.noemi@epa.gov
EPA Region 10	AK, ID, OR, WA	Phone: (206) 553-2580
Deborah Burgess		E-mail: burgess.deborah@epa.gov

Map of EPA Regions Credit: epa.gov



10. JOIN US ON FUTURE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING CALLS

Join our 30-minute discussion with EPA EWDJT grantees, alumni and new interested stakeholders. PLCs give grantees a chance to highlight their programs and an opportunity for others to learn from their experience. For questions or to be placed on the PLC register, send your contact information to hkballou@eicc.edu.

Visit our <u>HMTRI Brownfields Toolbox</u> website for more information on Brownfields Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training programs. All <u>PLC session notes and recordings</u> are also located on the website. For those interested in providing content or suggestions, please contact Heather Ballou at hkballou@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.

