

## OVERVIEW SECTION

**AGENCY:** ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

**TITLE:** “TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO BROWNFIELDS COMMUNITIES”

**ACTION:** Request for Proposals (RFP) - Initial Announcement

**RFA NO:** EPA-OSWER-OBLR-16-02

**CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NO.:** 66.814

**DATES:** The closing date and time for receipt of proposals is December 21, 2015, 11:59 p.m. ET. Proposals must be submitted electronically through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on December 21, 2015 to receive consideration. Proposals received after 11:59 p.m. ET on December 21, 2015, will not be considered.

**SUMMARY:** This notice announces the availability of funds and solicits proposals from eligible entities (including eligible non-profit organizations) to provide technical assistance to communities on brownfield issues.

**FUNDING/AWARDS:** The total estimated funding for the solicitation is \$11,000,000. EPA anticipates award of up to 11 cooperative agreement(s). The maximum value of each grant will be based on the technical assistance being provided, however, grant(s) in each geographical area shall not exceed \$1,000,000 each under this competitive opportunity. Cooperative agreements awarded will be funded incrementally. Additional funds may be added in each subsequent year of the agreement, subject to satisfactory performance and the availability of funds. (*Refer to Section 2(A).*)

### **CONTENTS BY SECTION**

1. Funding Opportunity Description
2. Award Information
3. Eligibility Information
4. Proposal and Submission Information
5. Proposal Review Information
6. Award Administration Information
7. Agency Contact
8. Other Information

## **Section 1 -Funding Opportunity Description**

### **A. Background.**

In the early 1990's, stakeholders expressed their concerns to the EPA about the problems associated with brownfields across the country. More than 450,000 properties that were once used for industrial, manufacturing, or commercial uses were lying abandoned or underused due to the suspicion of contamination. Brownfield areas, in both city centers and rural areas, were contributing to blight and joblessness in surrounding communities. Unknown environmental liabilities were preventing communities, developers, and investors from restoring these properties to productive use and revitalizing impacted neighborhoods.

In 1994, the EPA responded to the brownfields issue with an environmental protection approach that is locally based, encourages strong public-private partnerships, and promotes innovative and creative ways to assess, clean up, and redevelop brownfield sites. This approach empowers state, tribal, and local environmental and economic development officials to oversee brownfield activities, and encourages implementing local solutions to local problems.

On January 11, 2002, the President signed into law the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act (Brownfields Law). The Brownfields Law amended the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA or Superfund). The Brownfields Law expands potential federal financial assistance for brownfields revitalization, including grants for assessment, cleanup, training, research, and technical assistance. The law limits the liability of certain contiguous property owners and prospective purchasers of brownfield properties, and clarifies innocent landowner defenses to encourage revitalization and reuse of brownfield sites.

The EPA's Brownfields Program is built upon four basic goals and principles – protecting the environment, partnering for success, stimulating the marketplace, and promoting sustainable reuse. The EPA is committed to supporting technical assistance that will further the goals of the program and provide enhanced knowledge, tools, and processes to a broad range of stakeholders (e.g., tribal, state, local and other non-governmental entities), especially to small, rural and underserved communities.

A brownfield site is “real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant,” as defined in Section 101(39) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, as amended (CERCLA or Superfund). The law further defines the term “brownfield site” to include a site that is contaminated by a controlled substance...; is contaminated by petroleum or a petroleum product excluded from the definition of ‘hazardous substance’ ...; or is mine-scarred land.”

## B. Project Description

The EPA's Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization (OBLR) is soliciting proposals from eligible entities to provide technical assistance within the geographic areas delineated in section (C) to assist communities facing brownfields challenges. Grants awarded under the "Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) Communities" announcement will help communities tackle the challenge of assessing, cleaning up and preparing brownfields sites for redevelopment, especially underserved/rural/small and otherwise distressed communities. The technical assistance provided through this grant will cover technical support on various brownfields subject areas. Regardless of the mechanism the technical assistance is made available, it should be geared toward results and in helping the community to move their Brownfields sites forward in the process toward cleanup and reuse. In addition, understanding the underlying technical issues associated with a brownfields site will enable communities to participate substantively in brownfields site decisions. For the purposes of this grant, technical assistance is defined as providing advice and support, in the form of specialized knowledge, to a person or organization with the goal of guiding them through a particular process, or helping them understand complex brownfields-related subject matter. The recipient will provide technical assistance, consistent with Agency policy and procedures, and serve as an independent source of information to assist communities. The following types of activities are among the types of activities that may be provided:

- Review and explain technical reports (such as those related to site sampling, site assessment, and federal regulations);
- Provide information about basic science, environmental policy, and other technical matters;
- Help communities understand health risks associated with a brownfield site;
- Provide information to assist the community to better understand environmental issues and how these issues affect brownfield cleanup and redevelopment;
- Facilitate meetings between the local community, developers, lenders, and others involved in the cleanup and reuse of brownfield properties;
- Facilitate brownfield redevelopment efforts by supporting community and other stakeholder involvement activities;
- Facilitate visioning and reuse sessions;
- Provide assistance to communities dealing with plant closures, or other significant economic disruptions, adversely affected by natural disasters, or impacted by other sector based issues;
- Provide assistance in understanding and complying with state Brownfields/Voluntary Cleanup Program requirements, including land use restrictions and other land use controls including providing support when talking or meeting with state response programs.

Applicants may propose other types of technical assistance activities that meet the needs of communities affected by brownfields in the geographic areas they propose to serve as long as they are eligible.

## **C. Description of Subject Areas for Technical Assistance**

Under CERCLA 104(k)(6), the EPA is authorized to provide financial assistance which facilitates “the inventory of brownfield sites, site assessments, remediation of brownfield sites, community involvement, or site preparation.” The following are general subject areas for which the EPA will fund brownfields technical assistance to support communities. Proposals must include technical assistance in each of the six general subject areas described below although applicants may propose approaches to addressing each area that differ from or supplement the activities the EPA has described.

### **1. Community Involvement**

Activities supporting this subject area should look at brownfields issues from a community-based perspective. Projects should aim to provide communities (people, residents, community groups, businesses, schools, etc...) with information, tools and technology to better understand or participate in an informed way in decision making related to brownfields area-wide planning, assessment, cleanup, environmental workforce development and job training, and the redevelopment process, or to foster a better understanding of the impacts of living near a potentially contaminated brownfields property. The assistance may include arranging and organizing meetings of community groups or others that would help contribute to the meaningful involvement of community members in brownfields efforts.

### **2. Health Impacts of Brownfields Sites**

Technical assistance supporting this subject area should address the connection between health issues and brownfields. The assistance should focus on the impacts to health and quality of life related to health impacts when brownfields are not cleaned up and redeveloped, or examine effects on health and quality of life as a result of brownfields cleanup and redevelopment. The assistance should strive to improve the health of individuals living near brownfields (particularly, those belonging to sensitive and environmental justice populations) and to increase the level of understanding of brownfields-related health issues and to foster interaction and partnerships with local public health departments.

### **3. Science and Technology Relating to Brownfields Assessment, Remediation, and Site Preparation**

Technical assistance in this subject area should focus on various aspects of brownfields assessment, cleanup and subsequent redevelopment, including: assessment and inventory methods, site prioritization, development of a site prioritization scheme/methodology, sampling and cleanup methods, institutional controls and long-term stewardship to ensure

long-term protection of human health and the environment, and risk assessment methods and policies.

#### **4. Integrated Approaches to Brownfields Cleanup and Redevelopment**

Technical assistance in this subject area should address linkages between environmental, economic, and social issues, at brownfields sites including such things as: green revitalization, cleanup and redevelopment, port and waterfront utilization, energy issues, air and water quality issues, leveraging partner agency resources, sustainable development climate impacts, floodplain mitigation, green building design approaches, and quality of life related to social issues such as equitable development, affordable housing and environmental justice. Technical assistance outputs should aim to increase knowledge of linkages among various types of cleanup, redevelopment and planning efforts, and to increase coordination among such efforts including prevention of future brownfields.

#### **5. Brownfields Finance**

Technical assistance in this area should address finance and quality of life related to economic issues associated with brownfields cleanup such as assisting communities in working with federal, state, tribal and local governmental departments/agencies, lenders, investors, developers, and insurers and how to establish and leverage partnerships for funding assessment and cleanup that is consistent with plans for subsequent redevelopment. Activities may increase state, local, and tribal stakeholders' knowledge base of finance issues and topics such as tax incentives, loan funds, insurance, economic development/redevelopment and other financing tools, be in the form of helping to arrange or organize or develop interagency workgroups that would assist in developing plans, providing technical assistance and financial expertise, leveraged resources or provide assistance in helping to develop documents necessary to obtain additional funding for brownfields activities. Applicants should note; however, that general fundraising costs are unallowable under Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

#### **6. State, Tribal, and Local Government Brownfields Programs**

Technical assistance in this area should focus on providing brownfields information to state, tribal (including Alaskan native tribes), local government representatives and other stakeholders about brownfields issues, brownfields-related government programs, and brownfields funding opportunities to receive support (e.g., financial, technical assistance) for their brownfields cleanup and redevelopment efforts. Technical assistance should also provide support on state and tribal response programs and assistance to communities with Brownfield grant funding that need technical assistance to move their projects forward.

Because of the number of communities requiring support nationwide, the EPA has divided up the support to be provided through these cooperative agreements into 11 different geographical areas. Ten of the geographic areas will provide support to communities within the ten EPA regions. The eleventh geographical area will provide technical assistance nationwide and is intended to cover activities which cross all regions and are not region/state specific such as basic brownfields 101 workshops and webinars, etools that serve communities nationwide or those activities which must be provided nationwide such as etools that support grant preparation assistance.

- **Geographic Area #1** includes *EPA Region 1* (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT)
- **Geographic Area #2** includes *EPA Region 2* (NJ, NY, PR, VI)
- **Geographic Area #3** includes *EPA Region 3* (DE, DC, MD, PA, VA, WV)
- **Geographic Area #4** includes *EPA Region 4* (AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN)
- **Geographic Area #5** includes *EPA Region 5* (IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI)
- **Geographic Area #6** includes *EPA Region 6* (AR, LA, NM, OK, TX)
- **Geographic Area #7** includes *EPA Region 7* (IA, KS, NE, MO)
- **Geographic Area #8** includes *EPA Region 8* (CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY)
- **Geographic Area #9** includes *EPA Region 9* (AZ, CA, HI, NV, AS, GU)
- **Geographic Area #10** includes *EPA Region 10* (AK, ID, OR, WA)
- **Geographic Area #11** includes nationwide coverage to all regions and states

Applicants must address at least one of the Geographic Areas above and provide technical assistance to communities throughout their entire geographic area. Please note that the amount of funding provided to selected recipients will be commensurate with the level and amount of technical support being proposed. Those recipients proposing to provide less technical assistance may receive reduced funding amounts of those providing a greater amount of technical assistance or serving a larger geographic area.

Recipients selected for award in geographic areas 1-10, at their discretion, may also provide, on a limited basis, technical assistance to communities in other geographical areas. For example, a recipient may provide technical assistance to a community outside their geographic area if they are uniquely qualified to provide a specific type of technical assistance as determined by the EPA, assistance provided at national conferences, through webinars, and similar events, or when the EPA has decided that the type or nature of the technical assistance they are providing must be made available nationwide. The final scope of work that the EPA negotiates with successful applicants will specify the terms under which recipients may provide technical assistance outside of their geographic areas.

**Note to Applicants:** Applicants may submit proposals to provide technical assistance in multiple geographic areas. Applicants wishing to provide technical assistance in multiple geographical areas must submit a **separate** proposal for each geographic area they plan to serve. More information about providing technical assistance in multiple geographic areas can be found in the FAQs at [http://www2.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-11/documents/fy16\\_tabfaqs.pdf](http://www2.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-11/documents/fy16_tabfaqs.pdf)

For the purposes of these guidelines, the term “grant” refers to the cooperative agreement that EPA will award to a successful applicant. Please refer to Section 2(B) for a description of EPA’s anticipated substantial involvement in the grants awarded under these guidelines. The EPA urges applicants to review the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) which can be found at [http://www2.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-11/documents/fy16\\_tabfaqs.pdf](http://www2.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-11/documents/fy16_tabfaqs.pdf).

#### **D. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage**

The projects selected for award through this competition will support progress towards EPA Strategic Plan Goal 3 (Cleaning Up Communities and Advancing Sustainable Development), Objective 3.1 (Promote Sustainable and Livable Communities), and Sub-objective (Assess and Clean Up Brownfields). Specifically, recipients will provide technical assistance to communities which will facilitate the community in assessing, cleaning up and reusing brownfields sites in their community.

(View the EPA’s Strategic Plan <http://www2.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan.html>.)

#### **E. Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs**

Pursuant to EPA Order 5700.7, “Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements,” EPA requires that all grant applicants and recipients adequately address environmental outcomes and outputs. Outcomes and outputs differ both in their nature and in how they are measured. Applicants must discuss environmental outcomes and outputs in their proposed work plan.

1. **Outcomes.** The term “outcomes” refer to the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related or programmatic in nature, must be quantitative, and may not necessarily be achievable during the project period. EPA anticipates outcomes from projects awarded under this announcement will include increasing the capacity of nonfederal governmental entities, nonprofit organizations, and brownfields stakeholders to:
  - a. increase the grantee’s capacity to assess, cleanup and bring about sustainable reuse of brownfield properties;
  - b. Communities are better informed and equipped with the capacity to effectively address and be involved in brownfield activities;
  - c. focus attention on the environmental and human health conditions in low income communities and socio-economically disadvantaged communities unable to draw on alternative sources of funding for assessment or cleanup of brownfields and their subsequent redevelopment;
  - d. improve community involvement, communication, and the development of

- partnerships among differing stakeholders and increase partnerships for leveraging necessary funding; and
- e. enable communities to stimulate economic and other beneficial reuses of brownfield sites in order to improve environmental conditions and human health.

2. **Outputs.** The term “output” refers to an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work products related to an environmental goal or objective, that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative, but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period. EPA anticipates the outputs from the projects awarded under this announcement will include, but not be limited to:

- a. an increase in the number of communities and projects receiving technical assistance;
- b. number of brownfields assessment and cleanup projects moved forward;
- c. technical assistance workshops and webinars; and
- d. resource centers, factsheets, and case studies.

## **F. Supplementary Information**

The statutory authority for this action is Section (104)(k)(6) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980, as amended by the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act (Brownfields Law), 42 U.S.C. 9604(k)(6).

## **Section 2 - Award Information**

### **A. What is the amount of available funding?**

The total estimated funding available under this competitive opportunity is \$11,000,000 subject to the availability of funds, quality of proposals received and other applicable considerations. The maximum value of each grant will be based on the needs of the geographic area and the number of proposals selected for funding. The maximum funding for proposals serving any single geographic area shall not exceed \$1,000,000.

Additional funds may be added in each subsequent year of the agreement, subject to satisfactory performance and the availability of funds.

EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this competition, consistent with agency policy and guidance, if additional funding becomes available. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months from the date of original selection decisions. EPA reserves the right to not fund any proposals under this competition or fund proposals in some areas and not others. There is no guarantee that each area will be funded.



## **B. How many agreements will the EPA award in this competition?**

EPA anticipates selecting up to 11 recipients, one for each of the geographic areas delineated in Section 1(C) of this competitive announcement.

A cooperative agreement is an assistance agreement that is used when there is substantial federal involvement throughout the performance of the project. EPA awards cooperative agreements for those projects in which it expects to have substantial interaction with the recipient throughout the performance of the project. EPA will negotiate the precise terms and conditions of “substantial involvement” as part of the award process. Federal involvement may include close monitoring of the recipient’s performance; collaboration during the performance of the scope of work; in accordance with 2 CFR 200.317 and 2 CFR 200.318, as appropriate, review of proposed procurements; reviewing qualifications of key personnel; and/or review and comment on the content of printed or electronic publications prepared. EPA does not have the authority to select employees or contractors employed by the recipient. The final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient.

EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards under this announcement.

## **C. Will proposals be partially funded?**

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a proposal, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposal or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award and; therefore, maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

## **D. What is the project period for award(s) resulting from this solicitation?**

The project period for the TAB agreements is five years.

## **Section 3 - Eligibility Information and Threshold Criteria.**

### **A. Eligible Entities**

Proposals will be accepted from the following:

- general purpose local unit of government;
- land clearance authority or other quasi-governmental entity that operates under the supervision and control of, or as an agent of, a general purpose unit of government;
- governmental entity created by a state legislature;

- regional council or group of general purpose units of local government;
- redevelopment agency that is chartered or otherwise sanctioned by a state;
- state;
- Indian tribe other than in Alaska;
- Alaskan Native Regional Corporation and an Alaska Native Village Corporation as those terms are defined in the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S. C. 1601 and following); and the Metlakatla Indian Community; and
- nonprofit organizations (including institutions of higher education). Nonprofit organizations must meet the definition of that term in Section 4(6) of the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999, Public Law 106-107, 31 U.S.C. 6101. Public and nonprofit private educational institutions are eligible to apply. However, nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply. Evidence of nonprofit status under Federal, state, or tribal law must be provided at the time the application is submitted.

## **B. Cost Sharing or Matching.**

**No matching funds are required under this competition.** Although cost-sharing/matching is not required as a condition of eligibility under this competition, under *Section 5(A)* of this announcement EPA will evaluate applications based on a leveraging criterion. Leveraging is generally when an applicant proposes to provide its own additional funds/resources or those from third party sources to support or complement the project they are awarded under the competition which are above and beyond the EPA grant funds awarded. Any leveraged funds/resources, and their source, must be identified in the proposal (*See Section 4(B)(2)(b)(vii)*) of the announcement). Leveraged funds and resources may take various forms as noted below.

**Voluntary cost share** is a form of leveraging. Voluntary cost sharing is when an applicant voluntarily proposes to legally commit to provide costs or contributions to support the project when a cost share is not required. Applicants who propose to use a voluntary cost share **must** include the costs or contributions for the voluntary cost share in the project budget on the SF-424. If an applicant proposes a voluntary cost share, the following apply:

- A voluntary cost share is subject to the match provisions in the grant regulations (2 CFR Section 200.306, as applicable).
- A voluntary cost share may only be met with eligible and allowable costs.
- The recipient may not use other sources of federal funds to meet a voluntary cost share unless the statute authorizing the other federal funding provides that the federal funds may be used to meet a cost share requirement on a federal grant.
- The recipient is legally obligated to meet any proposed voluntary cost share that is included in the approved project budget. If the proposed voluntary cost share does not materialize during grant performance, then EPA may reconsider the legitimacy of the award and/or take other appropriate action as authorized by 2 CFR 200.338.

**Other leveraged funding/resources that are not identified as a voluntary cost share** -this form of leveraging may be met by funding from another federal grant, from an applicant's own resources, or resources from other third party sources. This form of leveraging should not be included in the budget and the costs need not be eligible and allowable project costs under the EPA assistance agreement. While this form of leveraging should not be included in the budget, the grant workplan should include a statement indicating that the applicant is expected to produce the proposed leveraging consistent with the terms of the announcement and the applicant's proposal. If applicants propose to provide this form of leveraging, EPA expects them to make the effort to secure the leveraged resources described in their proposals. If the proposed leveraging does not materialize during grant performance, then EPA may reconsider the legitimacy of the award and/or take other appropriate action as authorized by 2 CFR Parts 200 and 1500 as applicable.

### **C. Threshold Criteria.**

Proposals must meet the following “threshold criteria” by the time of proposal submission. Proposals that fail to meet any one of the threshold criteria will not be considered further. EPA will notify applicants who do not meet the threshold criteria within 15 calendar days of the “fail” determination. Proposals that meet the threshold criteria will then be evaluated based on the factors disclosed in *Section 5(A), Evaluation Criteria*.

The threshold criteria are as follows:

1. Applicants must be eligible entities. Applicants should describe how they are an eligible applicant as described in Section 3(A) Eligible Entities. Eligible non-profit entities must attach documentation/evidence of nonprofit status under Federal, state or tribal law, as applicable.
2. Applicants must address at least one of the geographic areas listed in Section I and must submit a separate application for each geographic area. Proposals that combine more than one geographic area will not be considered.
3. Proposals must address all six of the project subject areas as described in *Section 1(C), Description of Subject Areas for Technical Assistance* of this announcement.
4. Proposal must include technical assistance to communities within the entire geographical area.
5. Organizations proposing to utilize proprietary information must provide evidence of permission to use the information.

6. Proposals must be submitted electronically through <http://www.Grants.gov> and must be received by December 21, 2015, by 11:59 p.m. ET to receive consideration. Proposals received after the closing date and time of this announcement will be returned to sender without consideration.
7. Applications must substantially conform to the outline and content detailed in *Section 4(B), Content and Form of Application* of this announcement or they will be rejected. Pages in excess of the page limitations expressed in *Section 4(B), Content and Form of Application* will not be reviewed.

In addition, initial proposals must be submitted through [Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) as stated in Section 4 of this announcement (except in the limited circumstances where another mode of submission is specifically allowed for as explained in Section 4) on or before the proposal submission deadline published in Section 4 of this announcement. Applicants are responsible for following the submission instructions in Section 4 of this announcement to ensure that their proposal/application is timely submitted.

Proposals submitted after the submission deadline will be considered late and deemed ineligible without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling or because of technical problems associated with [Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) or relevant [SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov) system issues. An applicant's failure to timely submit their proposal/application through [Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) because they did not timely or properly register in [SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov) or [Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) will not be considered an acceptable reason to consider a late submission. Applicants should confirm receipt of their proposal with Debi Morey at [morey.debi@epa.gov](mailto:morey.debi@epa.gov) as soon as possible after the submission deadline—failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

#### **D. Eligible Uses of Funds.**

Eligible uses of grant funds include direct costs necessary to provide technical assistance identified in the approved workplan. This includes costs for personnel, technical experts, materials, supplies, room rentals, travel, communication, and transportation expenses.

#### **E. Ineligible Use of Funds.**

Funds awarded under Section 104(k)(6) of CERCLA are intended for technical assistance activities set forth in the agreement and may **not** be used for:

- Projects that duplicate grants awarded under other the EPA Brownfields grant programs described in CFDA Nos. 66.818, “Brownfields Assessment, Revolving Loan Funds, and Cleanup Grants,” 66.815, “Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grant,” and 66.814, “Brownfields Training, Research, or Technical

Assistance Grants (including Brownfield Area-Wide Planning grants).” Please see EPA’s Brownfields website for more details, <http://www2.epa.gov/brownfields>;

- Conducting site assessments or actual cleanups. However, recipients may provide technical assistance to a community that would allow/facilitate/increase their capacity to conduct site assessment or cleanup activities;
- Construction and land acquisition;
- Foreign travel;
- Management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs in the budget for the brownfields grant. The term “management fees or similar charges” refers to expenses added to the direct costs in order to accumulate a reserve fund for ongoing business expenses, unforeseen liabilities, or for other similar costs that are not allowable under the Brownfields grant as administrative costs; and
- The payment of administrative cost. In implementing the administrative cost prohibition, EPA has made a distinction between prohibited administrative costs and eligible programmatic costs. See FAQ at [http://www2.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-11/documents/fy16\\_tabfaqs.pdf](http://www2.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-11/documents/fy16_tabfaqs.pdf).

If a proposal is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities, that portion of the proposal will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the proposal, render the entire proposal ineligible for funding.

## **Section 4 - Proposal and Submission Information**

### **A. How to Obtain a Proposal Package**

Electronic copies of these guidelines can be obtained from the EPA’s Brownfields Program website at (<http://www2.epa.gov/brownfields>) or through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

Grants.gov proposal submission requires all applicants to submit the SF-424 and 424A forms (application for federal assistance with original signature and budget information for non-construction programs). *See Section 4.C.1. The SF-424 and 424A forms do not count against the page limits.* When completing the SF 424 forms, applicants will be required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS number). Applicants can receive a DUNS number, at no cost, by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711, or visiting the D&B website at: <http://www.dnb.com>.

### **B. Content and Form of Proposal**

**The following documents are required for all applications. See Section 4.C.1 for grants.gov submission requirements.** All applications must contain a “Narrative Proposal,” limited to 15 typed pages and one completed and signed Standard Form 424 (SF-424), Application for Federal Assistance. The “Narrative Proposal,” a maximum of 15 pages in length, must explicitly describe the applicant’s proposed project and specifically address how

it meets each of the evaluation criteria disclosed in *Section 5(A), Evaluation Criteria*, and the threshold eligibility criteria in *Section 3(C)*.

1. **Standard Form 424 (SF-424), Application for Federal Assistance, with original signature.** <http://www2.epa.gov/grants/epa-grantee-forms>

Individual grant application forms may be downloaded from the EPA's Grants and Debarment website by visiting: <http://www2.epa.gov/grants/epa-grantee-forms>

2. The **“Narrative Proposal”** shall not exceed 15 typed, single-line spaced, 8 ½” x 11” pages exclusive of the cover letter and use a minimum font size of 12 points. The “Narrative Proposal” must substantially conform to the following outline and content:

a. Cover Letter -The cover letter shall not exceed 2 pages and must include a brief description of your project and a description of the geographic area you propose to support. It should be written on your organization's official letterhead, and signed by an official with the authority to commit your organization to the proposed project. The cover letter must also include the following information:

- i. Applicant information -provide the name and full address of the applicant applying for funds. This is the agency or organization that will be receiving the grant and will be accountable to the EPA. This is also the person EPA will notify regarding the outcome of your proposal (selection/non-selection).
- ii. Location -city, country, and state or reservation, tribally owned lands, tribal fee land, etc., of your organization.
- iii. Contacts -provide phone/fax numbers, e-mail address, and mailing address of the Project Director and head of organization/Executive Director responsible for the project application. These individuals may be contacted if other information is needed.
- iv. Cooperative partners -provide names and phone numbers of individuals and organizations that have agreed to participate in the implementation of the project, if any.
- v. Funding requested and Geographic Area -specify the amount of funding you are requesting from the EPA and the geographic area described in section 1(C) that you propose to support. Please note that if you are proposing to support more than one geographical area, then a separate proposal **MUST** be submitted for each geographic area.

b. Detailed Project Description -The project description must provide the information below on how the applicant will implement and conduct its proposed project and include how the application addresses each of the Threshold criteria from Section 3(C) as well as the evaluation criteria in Section 5 of this announcement.

- i. **Project Description** - Describe the current problem(s), and then your proposed solution for addressing these problems including the benefits of the technical assistance you plan to provide. Include a summary of your overall project goals, activities and milestones for providing technical assistance, your plan to prioritize the type, nature, and communities being provided assistance, the type of technical assistance you plan to provide, and your strategy to accomplish the overall project goals. Include the types of technical assistance which will be provided to communities in the geographic area described in Section 1(C) and the number (and geographic variability) of the communities you estimate will be supported including the fair distribution of assistance between urban and non-urban areas, and the extent the technical assistance will promote community engagement and active involvement in brownfields prioritization, assessment, cleanup and redevelopment decisions (including decisions affecting environmental justice, rural communities, and/or tribal groups). Discuss how the technical assistance will help facilitate the use or reuse of existing infrastructure or create or preserve greenspace or assist in other nonprofit reuses of brownfields in communities within the geographic area you are serving. Provide information on how the technical assistance you plan to provide will help identify and stimulate the availability of funds for assessment, cleanup and reuse or help to stimulate economic development associated with community brownfield sites. Provide information on how the technical assistance will help facilitate the identification and reduction of threats to human health and the environment that may be associated with exposure to hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants or petroleum products, or how the technical assistance would facilitate the identification and reduction of threats to the health or welfare of children, pregnant women, minority or low income communities, or other sensitive populations. Include in your discussion your plan and approach, including the extent to which you propose to use subawardees or contractors (perhaps having different areas of technical/legal/fiscal/other expertise, if any), or use information/lessons learned and/or coordinate with other grantees awarded under CERCLA 104(k)(6) (including TABs in other geographical areas). Your discussion should include an explanation of how you plan to use subawardees/contractors and the information/lessons learned from other grantees awarded under the same statute and how this will contribute to the effective and efficient performance of the project. The discussion should also include the methods you plan to use to provide the technical assistance (one-on-one, workshops, webinars, other) and how these are the most effective and efficient methods of providing the assistance. Also discuss your outreach plan/strategy to

ensure communities are aware of the availability of the technical support being made available through your program.

- ii. **Organizational Knowledge/Experience/Expertise** -Summarize your organization's knowledge, experience, expertise in the six subject areas where technical assistance is being provided. In addition, provide information regarding your organizational knowledge, experience, and expertise in working with the communities in the geographic area with particular emphasis on technical assistance provided which assisted in moving projects forward to completion. Provide information on your organizational experience and plan for successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources (or the ability to obtain them including the organizations contingency plan to replace key personnel) to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. Include a discussion of the network you have in place such as key contacts, or other resources having additional knowledge or expertise that will assist you in successfully providing technical assistance to communities in the geographic area. Identify all proposed partnerships, stakeholder groups, or other networks that will be involved and their role in the successful accomplishment of the program.

Note: EPA anticipates that in order for the applicant to provide the full range of necessary technical assistance to the largest number of communities in the geographic area it may be necessary to form partnerships with other organizations either through subawards or procurements. Please refer to Section 4D. Also note that procurement of commercial services (e.g. consultants, audio visual equipment, meeting space) is subject to the Procurement Standards of 2 CFR 1500.9, as applicable. Naming a commercial vendor as a "partner" does not relieve the applicant of responsibility for complying with competitive procurement requirements, including cost or price analysis. Also note, there will be a term and condition in all cooperative agreements awarded prohibiting contractors from marketing their firm or services when they are being reimbursed for their services under the cooperative agreement. In addition, if the applicant or their subawardees have both non-profit and for-profit components of their organizations, then the non-profit portion implementing the grant/subcontract is prohibited from recommending communities use the services of its for-profit component when being reimbursed for their services under the cooperative agreement.

- iii. **Programmatic Capability and Past Performance** -submit a list of federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements, but not Federal contracts) similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than five agreements, and preferably EPA agreements, if any) and describe (i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements and achieve the



objectives of the project and (ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why not) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements. In evaluating applicants under the factors in Section 5, the EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from the EPA files and from current/prior grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). In addition, provide information on your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and describe your staff's expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these factors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). Proposals that do not provide any response for this criteria, may receive a score of 0.

- iv. **Community Need** -Describe the technical assistance program you plan to deliver (relevant to the six subject areas) and how that program will meet the needs of the communities within the geographic area who have an inability to draw on other sources of funding for environmental remediation and subsequent redevelopment in which their brownfield sites are located because of their small population or the low income of the community. Include a discussion of the community need factors you considered and how the technical assistance you plan to provide will address these issues. While we anticipate some of the community needs maybe broad in nature, we expect others to be more well-defined. Include some examples or the basis for how you determined the community needs which your program will be addressing.
- v. **Budget/Resources** -Provide a detailed itemized budget proposal that is reasonable and appropriate to achieve the project's objectives and clearly explain how funds will be used. Describe your procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner. The budget should include information on each major task using the following cost elements. For each major task indicate what portion of the cost the EPA grant funds will be used and what portion the applicant or other partners will fund, if any. Only include eligible costs in your budget.

1. Personnel

2. Fringe Benefits
3. Travel
4. Equipment
5. Supplies
6. Contractual Costs
7. Other Costs (Be specific)
8. Total Direct Costs

**Sample Format for Budget**

<b>Budget Categories</b>	Task_	Task_	Task_	Task_	Task_	Task_	Task_	Total
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Personnel								
Fringe Benefits								
Travel								
Equipment <sup>1</sup>								
Supplies								
Contractual <sup>2</sup>								
Other (specify)____								
<b>Total</b>								

<sup>1</sup>The EPA defines equipment as items that cost \$5,000 or more with a useful life of more than one year. Items costing less than \$5,000 are considered supplies. Generally, equipment is not required for technical assistance grants.

<sup>2</sup>Applicants must comply with the procurement standards contained in 2 CFR 200.317 through 200.326.

The term "management fees or similar charges" refers to expenses added to the direct costs in order to accumulate and reserve funds for ongoing business expenses, unforeseen liabilities, or for other similar costs that are not allowable under the EPA assistance agreements. Management fees or similar charges may not be used to improve or expand the project funded under this agreement, except to the extent authorized as a direct cost of carrying out the scope of work.

- vi. **Performance Measurement: Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs** -Specify the anticipated environmental outcomes and outputs as described in *Section 1(E), Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs* of this announcement. Discuss how you propose to track, measure, and evaluate your progress in achieving the project outcomes, outputs, and project results, including both quantitative and qualitative performance measurements. (Refer to *Section 5(A), Evaluation Criteria, Performance Measurement.*)
- vii. **Voluntary Cost Share/Match and Other Leveraged Funds (See Section 3(B))**
  - Discuss how you will coordinate the use of EPA funding with other Federal and/or non-Federal sources of funds/resources to leverage additional resources beyond the grant funds awarded to carry out the proposed project(s).

Also discuss how EPA funding will complement activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. This includes, but is not limited to, funds and other resources leveraged from other Federal agencies, foundations, non-profits, surrounding communities, local universities and colleges, or local businesses. The proposal should describe the type and amount of leveraging you anticipate will be available, how you will obtain the leveraged resources, the likelihood the leveraging will materialize during grant performance, the strength of the leveraging commitment, and the role the leveraged funds/resources will play in the overall project. Selected applicants are expected to abide by their proposed leveraging commitments during grant performance and the failure to do so may affect the legitimacy of the award.

Examples of leveraging may include, but is not limited to, such things as funding to provide additional technical assistance to communities that complements the TAB program; utilizing/combining the technical assistance provided through your program with that provided by others in order to provide a more robust comprehensive technical assistance program for communities; use of another organization's facilities, outreach network, or services when providing technical assistance workshops, design charrettes, or other technical assistance.

Proposals should also include as an attachment, documentation of any firm leveraging commitments.

3. **Attachments** -the following documents should be included as attachments to the proposal. **These documents will not count as part of the 15 page limit and do not have an individual page limitation.**

- a. **Milestones** – include a schedule indicating the start and completion dates of significant tasks under your program.

- b. **Community Letter(s) of Support** from communities with which you have worked and /or developed a relationship where technical assistance has been provided. The organizations providing letters of support should represent a broad spectrum of the community and include grassroots, neighborhood, school, and other brownfield affected organizations beyond city council, business organizations, or local government.

Letter(s) of support should include the type of assistance or role the applicant played with the organization/project. The letters of support are for the applicant organization (or staff) only, and do not include relationships that the subawardees or contractors may have with the communities. The applicant should provide names and phone numbers of persons to contact at these community organizations. The EPA may contact these organizations to verify the information provided. The information contained in the letter(s) of support will be considered as part of the information provided under the Organizational Knowledge/Experience/Expertise criteria. Proposals with no letter(s) of support will still be considered, but may be evaluated less favorably.

- c. **Documentation/evidence of current non-profit status** under Federal, state or tribal law, as applicable.
- d. **Documentation of firm leveraging commitments, if any** – attach letters or other documentation which documents and confirms firm leveraging commitments to your technical assistance program.

### C. Submitting a Proposal Package

#### 1. Requirement to Submit Through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and Limited Exception Procedures

Applicants, except as noted below, must apply electronically through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) under this funding opportunity based on the grants.gov instructions in this announcement. If an applicant does not have the technical capability to apply electronically through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) because of limited or no internet access which prevents them from being able to upload the required application materials to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), the applicant must contact [OGDWaivers@epa.gov](mailto:OGDWaivers@epa.gov) or the address listed below in writing (e.g., by hard copy, email) at *least 15 calendar days prior to the submission deadline under this announcement* to request approval to submit their application materials through an alternate method.

#### **Mailing Address:**

OGD Waivers  
c/o Barbara Perkins  
USEPA Headquarters  
William Jefferson Clinton Building

1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.  
Mail Code: 3903R  
Washington, DC 20460

**Courier Address:**

OGD Waivers  
c/o Barbara Perkins  
Ronald Reagan Building  
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.  
Rm # 51267  
Washington, DC 20004

In the request, the applicant must include the following information:

- Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
- Organization Name and DUNS
- Organization's Contact Information (email address and phone number)
- Explanation of how they lack the technical capability to apply electronically through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) because of 1) limited internet access or 2) no internet access which prevents them from being able to upload the required application materials through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

EPA will only consider alternate submission exception requests based on the two reasons stated above and will timely respond to the request -- all other requests will be denied. If an alternate submission method is approved, the applicant will receive documentation of this approval and further instructions on how to apply under this announcement. Applicants will be required to submit the documentation of approval with any initial application submitted under the alternative method. In addition, any submittal through an alternative method must comply with all applicable requirements and deadlines in the announcement including the submission deadline and requirements regarding proposal content and page limits (although the documentation of approval of an alternate submission method will not count against any page limits).

If an exception is granted, it is valid for submissions to EPA for the remainder of the entire calendar year in which the exception was approved and can be used to justify alternative submission methods for application submissions made through December 31<sup>st</sup> of the calendar year in which the exception was approved (e.g., if the exception was approved on March 1, 2015, it is valid for any competitive or non-competitive application submission to EPA through December 31, 2015). Applicants need only request an exception once in a calendar year and all exceptions will expire on December 31<sup>st</sup> of that calendar year. Applicants must request a new exception from required electronic submission through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) for submissions for any succeeding calendar year. For example, if there is a competitive opportunity issued on December 1, 2015, with a submission deadline of January 15, 2016, the applicant would need a new exception to submit through alternative methods beginning January 1, 2016.

Please note that the process described in this section is only for requesting alternate submission methods. All other inquiries about this announcement must be directed to the Regional Brownfield Contact listed in Section VII. Queries or requests submitted to the email address identified above for any reason other than to request an alternate submission method will not be acknowledged or answered.

## 2. Submission Instructions

The electronic submission of your application must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and is authorized to sign applications for federal assistance. For more information on the registration requirements that must be completed in order to submit an application through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on “Applicants” on the top of the page and then go to the “Get Registered” link on the page. If your organization is not currently registered with [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), please encourage your office to designate an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible. Please note that the registration process also requires that your organization have a DUNS number and a current registration with the System for Award Management (SAM) and the process of obtaining both could take a month or more. Applicants must ensure that all registration requirements are met in order to apply for this opportunity through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and should ensure that all such requirements have been met well in advance of the submission deadline. Registration on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov), and DUNS number assignment is FREE.

Applicants need to ensure that the AOR who submits the application through Grants.gov and whose DUNS number is listed on the application is an AOR for the applicant listed on the application. Additionally, the DUNS number listed on the application must be registered to the applicant organization’s SAM account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on “Applicants” on the top of the page and then “Apply for Grants” from the dropdown menu and then follow the instructions accordingly. Please note: apply through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), you must use Adobe Reader software and download the compatible Adobe Reader version. For more information about Adobe Reader, to verify compatibility, or to download the free software, please visit <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/software/adobe-reader-compatibility.html>.

You may also be able to access the application package for this announcement by searching for the opportunity on <http://www.grants.gov>. Go to <http://www.grants.gov> and then click on “Search Grants” at the top of the page and enter the Funding Opportunity Number, **EPA-OSWER-OBLR-16-02**, or the CFDA number that applies to the announcement (**CFDA 66.814**), in the appropriate field and click the “Search” button. Alternatively, you may be able to access

the application package by clicking on the “Application Package” button at the top right of the synopsis page for the announcement on <http://www.grants.gov>. To find the synopsis page, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click “Browse Agencies” in the middle of the page and then go to “Environmental Protection Agency” to find the EPA funding opportunities.

**Proposal Submission Deadline:** Your organization’s AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) **no later than December 21, 2015, 11:59 p.m. EST**. Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application process and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.

Please submit *all* of the application materials described below using the [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) application package that you downloaded using the instructions above. For additional instructions on completing and submitting the electronic application package, click on the “Show Instructions” tab that is accessible within the application package itself.

Applications submitted through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) will be time and date stamped electronically. If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (not from grants.gov) within 30 days of the proposal deadline, please contact Debi Morey at [morey.debi@epa.gov](mailto:morey.debi@epa.gov). Failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

## **Application Materials**

**The following forms and documents are mandatory under this announcement.**

- I. Application for Federal Assistance (Standard Form 424)
- II. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (Standard Form 424A)
- III. Transmittal Letter and Narrative Proposal. See Section 4.C for details on the content of the Transmittal Letter and Narrative Proposal, and the associated page limits.
- IV. Required Attachments. See Section 4.C of this announcement.

## **D. TRANSMISSION DIFFICULTIES**

Once the application package has been completed, the “Submit” button should be enabled. If the “Submit” button is not active, please call Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726.

Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Applicants should save the completed application package with two different file names before providing it to the AOR to avoid having to re-create the package should submission problems be experienced or a revised application needs to be submitted.

**Submitting the application.** The application package must be transferred to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) by an AOR. The AOR should close all other software before attempting to submit the application package. Click the “submit” button of the application package. Your Internet browser will launch

and a sign-in page will appear. **Note: Minor problems are not uncommon with transfers to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). It is essential to allow sufficient time to ensure that your application is submitted to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) BEFORE the proposal submission deadline.** The Grants.gov support desk operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except Federal Holidays. A successful transfer will end with an on-screen acknowledgement. For documentation purposes, print or screen capture this acknowledgement. If a submission problem occurs, reboot the computer – turning the power off may be necessary – and re-attempt the submission. Note: [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) issues a “case number” upon a request for assistance.

If you are experiencing transmission difficulties that result in a late transmission, no transmission, or rejection of the transmitted proposal, follow the guidance below. EPA may decide to review the proposal if it is clearly demonstrated that these transmission difficulties were due solely as a result of problems associated with the transfer to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). The decision regarding acceptance of the proposal for review will be made by EPA and provided to the applicant within ten working days of the request. All e-mails, as described below, are to be sent to Debi Morey at [morey.debi@epa.gov](mailto:morey.debi@epa.gov) with the Applicant Name in the Subject Line.

- (1) Late transfer or no transmission due to electronic submission problems - should electronic submission problems result in the proposal being transferred to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) after 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the solicitation closing date, send an e-mail documenting the problem, include the Grants.gov “case number” and attach the entire proposal.
- (2) [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) rejection of proposal - if a notification is received from [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) stating that the proposal has been rejected for reasons other than late submittal, immediately send an email which includes the notice provided by [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) documenting rejection and attach the entire proposal.

Applications submitted through grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically. If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (not from grants.gov) within 30 days of the proposal deadline, please contact Debi Morey at [morey.debi@epa.gov](mailto:morey.debi@epa.gov). Failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

Be aware that EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to transmit due to [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov) or relevant [www.Sam.gov](http://www.Sam.gov) system issues or for unforeseen exigent circumstances, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access. Failure of an applicant to submit timely because they did not properly or timely register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov is not an acceptable reason to justify acceptance of a late submittal.

If you are experiencing problems resulting in an inability to upload the application to Grants.gov, it is essential to call [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov) for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 before the application deadline. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not



able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Be *sure* to obtain a case number from Grants.gov. If the problems stem from unforeseen exigent circumstances unrelated to Grants.gov, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access, contact Debi Morey at (202) 566-2735.

**Unsuccessful transfer of the application package:** If a successful transfer of the application cannot be accomplished even with assistance from Grants.gov due to electronic submission system issues or unforeseen exigent circumstances, send an email message to Debi Morey at [morey.debi@epa.gov](mailto:morey.debi@epa.gov) prior to the application deadline. The email message must document the problem and include the Grants.gov case number as well as the entire application in PDF format as an attachment.

**Grants.gov rejection of the application package:** If a notification is received from Grants.gov stating that the application has been rejected for reasons other than late submittal promptly send an email to Debi Morey at [morey.debi@epa.gov](mailto:morey.debi@epa.gov) with the FON in the subject line within one business day of the closing date of this solicitation. The email should include any materials provided by Grants.gov and attach the entire application in PDF format.

## **E. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated Into the Solicitation**

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to confidential business information, contracts and subawards under grants, and proposal assistance and communications, can be found at <http://www2.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses>. These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing proposals for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

## **Section 5 - Application Review Information**

### **A. Evaluation Criteria**

Each eligible proposal will be evaluated according to the criteria set forth below. Applicants must directly and explicitly address these criteria as part of their “Narrative Proposals.” Each proposal will be rated under a points system, with a total of 100 points possible.

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Maximum Points per Criterion</b>
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**Project Description.** Extent to which the application effectively addresses the requirements described in Section 1(B) of this announcement. This criterion will evaluate:

- The extent to which the “Narrative Proposal” clearly, concisely and realistically presents a statement of the problem, description of the proposed project goals, activities, benefits, and project milestones. (10 points)
- The types of technical assistance which will be provided to communities in the geographic area described in Section 1(C), how the applicant will prioritize the communities being served and the various types of technical assistance they are provide, and the number (and geographic variability) of the communities supported including the fair distribution of assistance between urban and non-urban areas. The applicant’s outreach plan/strategy to ensure communities are aware of the availability of the technical support they have available. (5 points)
- The extent the technical assistance will promote community engagement and active involvement in brownfields prioritization, assessment, cleanup and redevelopment decisions (including environmental justice, rural communities, and/or tribal groups). (5 points)
- The extent the technical assistance you plan to provide will help identify and stimulate the availability of funds for assessment, cleanup and reuse or help to stimulate economic development associated with community brownfield sites. (5 points)
- The extent the technical assistance will help facilitate the identification and reduction of threats to human health and the environment that may be associated with exposure to hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants or petroleum products, or how the technical assistance would facilitate the identification and reduction of threats to the health or welfare of children, pregnant women, minority or low income communities, or other sensitive populations. (5 points)
- The extent that the technical assistance will help facilitate the use or reuse of existing infrastructure or create or preserve greenspace or assist in other non-profit reuses of brownfields. (5 points)
- The extent that the plan and approach proposes to effectively and efficiently perform the project including the mechanisms used to provide the technical assistance and the use of subawards or contractors, if any, and coordination with other CERCLA 104(k)(6) grantees and incorporation/use of lessons learned from these groups. Applicants will be evaluated more favorable if they include a reasonable and appropriate amount of subgrant and contract support, coordinate and incorporate lessons learned from other CERCLA 104(k)(6) grantees as part of implementing their program, and can clearly demonstrate how their

40

<p>approach will be an effective and efficient method to provide the technical assistance in the project. For example the use of local staff to provide technical assistance. Applicants will be evaluated less favorably if the use of subawards or contracts does not contribute to the effective or efficient performance of the project, they have no plans to coordinate or incorporate lessons learned from other CERCLA 104(k)(6) grantees into their program, or if the project consists of only holding general brownfields meetings or conferences. (5 points)</p>	
<p><b>Organizational Knowledge/Experience/Expertise.</b> This criterion will evaluate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant’s organizational knowledge and experience in working with communities in the geographic area where technical assistance is provided, and engaging them in brownfield prioritization, assessment, cleanup and redevelopment issues, and delivering sound and effective technical assistance. (6 points)</li> <li>• The applicant’s experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project including having the necessary partnerships, contacts, or established network in the targeted geographic area. (7 points)</li> <li>• The depth of staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge in the 6 focus areas as described in Section 1(C), and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. (5 points)</li> <li>• The applicant’s contingency plan to replace key personnel. Indicate how the applicant will ensure coverage in case of changes in key personnel.(2 points)</li> </ul> <p>Note: Applicants who demonstrate they are experienced and familiar with local community issues and have demonstrated credibility with the communities either through their local presence in the communities or through other means may improve their scoring under this criterion. Applicants whose proposals include knowledge, experience, and expertise in moving projects forward to completion may receive more favorable consideration under this criterion.</p>	20
<p><b>Programmatic Capability and Past Performance.</b> Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account the applicant’s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizational and staff experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project including staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to</li> </ul>	10

<p>obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. (5 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in response to Section 4(B) of the announcement. (3 points)</li> <li>• History of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section 4(B) of the announcement including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements, and the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on its progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not. (2 points)</li> </ul> <p>Note: In evaluating the past performance components of this criterion, the Agency will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these subfactors. Proposals that do not provide any response for this criterion may receive a score of 0.</p>	
<p><b>Community Need.</b> Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the technical assistance program the applicant has described and plans to deliver will meet the needs of one or more community(ies) that have an inability to draw on other sources of funding. (10 points)</li> </ul>	10
<p><b>Budget/Resources.</b> Under this criterion, the application will be evaluated regarding the extent to which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The budget is clearly stated, detailed, contains only eligible costs, is reasonable, and appropriate to achieve the project’s objectives and includes cost estimates for each of the proposed project activities to be performed with the EPA funds. The applicant’s budget will be evaluated based on the effective use of the budget resources for the work to be performed and their approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring grant funds are expended in a timely and efficient manner. (10 points)</li> </ul>	10
<p><b>Performance Measurement: Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs.</b> Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent to which the “Narrative Proposal” realistically describes how the project will lead to measurable environmental</p>	5

<p>results (i.e., amount of pollution prevented; waste reduced, reused, recycled or, resources conserved). The proposals will be evaluated on the quality and extent to which they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly specify anticipated environmental outcomes and outputs as described in <i>Section 1(E), Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs</i>. (2 points)</li> <li>• Clearly describe the measures of success for the project. Measure of success should be either measures of environmental improvement or should be directly linked to such measures. EPA will look for quantitative and qualitative measurability. (2 points)</li> <li>• Describe how progress towards achieving project outcomes and outputs will be tracked, evaluated and measured. Include a description of any planned reports or other deliverables that measure and track the project success and, document achievement of expected outputs identified in <i>Section 1(E), Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs</i>. (1 point)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Leveraging.</b> Under this criterion, applicant’s will be evaluated based on the extent to which the proposal demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the applicant will coordinate the use of the EPA grant funds with other Federal or non-Federal sources of funds from project partners, including other Federal agencies, foundations, non-profits, surrounding communities, or local businesses to leverage additional resources beyond the grant funds awarded to carry out the technical assistance project. The applicant will be evaluated on the type and amount of leveraged resources, the likelihood of the resources materializing, the strength of the leveraging commitment, and the role that the leveraged funds/resources will play in the overall grant project. Proposals with firm leveraged commitments or with leveraged commitments that will significantly enhance their technical assistance program will be evaluated more favorably.</li> </ul>	5

**B. Other Factors**

Final funding decisions will be made by the Selection Official based on the rankings and preliminary recommendations of the EPA evaluation team. In making the final funding decisions, the Selection Official may also consider the following factors, as appropriate:

- Balanced distribution of funds among the geographic areas.

**C. Review and Selection Process**

All proposals received by the closing date and time for submissions will first be reviewed to determine eligibility for funding consideration based upon compliance with *Section 3, Eligibility Information and Threshold Criteria*. Only applications determined eligible and passing the threshold review will be evaluated for technical merit.

Each eligible proposal will be evaluated by a review panel of EPA staff for technical merit, based on the evaluation factors detailed in *Section 5(A), Evaluation Criteria* of this solicitation. Upon completion of the technical merit evaluation, each proposal will be given an evaluated numerical score, with a total of 100 points possible. The evaluated numerical scores will be placed in rank ordered by geographic area. The review panel will recommend the proposal with the highest evaluated numerical score by geographic area to the EPA Headquarters Selection Official for award.

The EPA Headquarters Selection Official will make the final funding decision. The decision will be based upon the recommendation of the review panel and consideration of “Other Factors” detailed in *Section 5(B)* of this announcement.

## **Section 6 - Award Administration Information**

### **A. Award Notices**

EPA anticipates notification to successful applicants will be made via telephone or electronic or postal mail by January 30, 2016. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the proposal or the project contact listed in the proposal. This notification, which informs the applicant that its proposal has been selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by EPA’s Grants and Interagency Agreements Management Division (GIAMD). Applicants are cautioned that only a grants officer is authorized to bind the Government to the expenditure of funds; selection does not guarantee an award will be made. For example, statutory authorization, funding or other issues discovered during the award process may affect the ability of EPA to make an award to an applicant. The award notice, signed by an EPA grants officer, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic or postal mail. The successful applicant may need to prepare and submit additional documents and forms (e.g., work plan), which must be approved by EPA, before the grant can officially be awarded. The time between notification of selection and award of a grant can take up to 90 days or longer.

### **B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

1. Funding will be awarded as a cooperative agreement. The applicants whose proposals are selected will be asked to submit a cooperative agreement application package to the EPA office. This package will include the application (Standard Form 424), a proposed work

plan, a proposed budget, and other required forms. An EPA Project Officer will work with selected grantees to finalize the budget and work plan.

2. Approved cooperative agreements will include terms and conditions that will be binding on the grant recipient. Terms and conditions specify what grantees must do to ensure that grant-related and program-related requirements are met. Applicants also will be required to submit progress reports in accordance with Uniform Grant Guidance found in 2 CFR 200.328.

### **C. Reporting Requirement**

Quarterly progress reports and a detailed final report will be required. The quarterly progress reports will be submitted to the EPA Project Officer within thirty days after each reporting period. These reports shall cover work status, work progress, milestones, outputs/outcomes reached, difficulties encountered, preliminary data results and a statement of activity anticipated during the subsequent reporting period. A discussion of expenditures for the quarter, as well as to date, that correspond to each cost category along with a comparison of the percentage of the project completed to the project schedule and an explanation of significant discrepancies shall be included in the report. The report shall also include any changes of key personnel concerned with the project.

The final report will address goals and objectives, performance measurements, lessons learned, any other resources leveraged during the project and how they were used, and any plans to continue the project after the expiration of the grant/cooperative agreement and associated sources of funding. The final report will be submitted to the EPA Project Officer at the close of the grant.

### **D. Use of Funds**

An applicant that receives an award under this announcement is expected to manage assistance agreement funds efficiently and effectively and make sufficient progress towards completing the project activities described in the work-plan in a timely manner. The assistance agreement will include terms/conditions implementing this requirement. The agency expects timely drawdown of funds and a yearly financial report. In addition to quarterly reports, other required financial reports will provide the agency with information regarding the progress being made.

### **E. Disputes**

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at <http://www2.epa.gov/grants/dispute-resolution-procedures>. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting Debi Morey at [morey.debi@epa.gov](mailto:morey.debi@epa.gov).

## **F. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated Into the Solicitation**

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to DUNS, SAM, copyrights, disputes, and administrative capability, can be found at <http://www2.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses>. These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing proposals for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

### **Section 7 -Agency Contact.**

#### **A. Agency Contact Information:**

Debi Morey, U.S. EPA, Office of Brownfields Cleanup and Redevelopment (MC 5105-T), 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20460; Phone (202) 566-2735; or email [morey.debi@epa.gov](mailto:morey.debi@epa.gov).

### **Section 8 -Other Information.**

Applicants selected for this award will be required to submit a final cooperative agreement application package to the EPA. This package will include an EPA-approved final work plan that describes the work to be performed, including a final budget, and the required certification forms.