

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

**TITLE:** BROWNFIELDS TRAINING, RESEARCH, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS

**ACTION:** Request for Proposals (RFP) – Frequently Asked Questions

**RFA NO:** EPA-OSWER-OBLR-12-05

**CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NOS.:** 66.814

**SUMMARY:** The following are frequently asked questions related to the subject solicitation.

**1. What is the closing date of the Technical Assistance to Brownfields Communities solicitation?**

The closing date and time for receipt of proposals is November 14, 2012.

**2. What is the total maximum award amount?**

The maximum award for the 5 year period of the cooperative agreement is \$1,000,000 for a recipient selected in geographical area 5 and \$500,000 for each recipient selected in geographical areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

**3. Can an applicant submit proposals for multiple geographic areas?**

Yes. Applicants may submit proposals to provide technical assistance in multiple geographic areas. Applicants wishing to provide technical assistance in multiple geographical areas should submit a **separate** proposal for each geographic area they plan to serve. It is very important that applicants provide a separate proposal since proposals will be ranked by geographic area, and the highest ranked proposal in combination with the Other Factors outlined in the solicitation will be used to determine the proposals recommended for selection.

**4. Would an entity that is currently performing brownfields assessments for a community be eligible to apply for a Brownfields Training, Research, and Technical Assistance grant?**

It depends. The fact that an entity is currently performing a brownfields assessment for a community does not automatically mean the entity is eligible to apply for this funding opportunity. For example, for-profit consulting or engineering firms that have a contract with a community to perform site assessments, as well as individuals are not eligible to receive grants under this solicitation.

Entities eligible to apply for the Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) Communities funding opportunity include 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, 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, Alaska Native Village Corporation, and Metlakatla Indian Community; and
- Nonprofit organizations (including institutions of higher education).

**5. Is a registered 501(c)(6) organization eligible to apply for a Brownfields Training, Research, and Technical Assistance grant?**

Yes, nonprofit trade associations exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(6) of the internal revenue code that do not engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are eligible to apply for funding under CERCLA 104(k)(6), therefore, they would be eligible to apply for a Brownfields Training, Research, and Technical Assistance grant.

**6. Would it be acceptable to EPA for an applicant to work with another agency or organization as partners?**

It depends. EPA awards funds to one eligible applicant as the “recipient” even if other eligible applicants are named as ‘partners,’ ‘co-applicants,’ members of a ‘coalition,’ or ‘consortium.’ The recipient is accountable to EPA for the proper expenditure of funds. Generally, applicants may work with another agency or organization as a partner. If cooperative agreement funding is used to provide subgrants or subawards to the partner organization, the recipient must comply with applicable requirements for subawards or subgrants including those contained in 40 CFR Part 30 or 31, as applicable. The terms of the solicitation describe the rules that must be followed in these instances.

**7. Can the Brownfields Training, Research, and Technical Assistance grant reimburse the indirect costs of a contractor?**

Yes. The administrative cost prohibition applies only to the grant recipient's and subgrantee's indirect costs and not to the costs the grantee incurs under a contract for eligible programmatic costs. A grantee would be able to use grant funds to reimburse a contractor for his indirect costs if the contractor is performing eligible programmatic activities, and the costs were reasonable and allocable to the task being performed. The EPA guidelines provide that eligible programmatic costs are expenditures for activities that are integral to achieving the purpose of the grant. A contractor's indirect costs that are otherwise reasonable (e.g. are covered by an indirect cost rate agreement with its cognizant federal audit agency) and normally charged to cost reimbursement contracts are programmatic rather than administrative.

**8. Can a grantee or subgrantee who directly charges the amount of their building lease be reimbursed for those costs under the Brownfields Training, Research, and Technical Assistance grant or would the lease costs be considered an ineligible administrative cost? The building lease costs are not part of the negotiated overhead rate. They are charged as direct costs with no overhead costs applied.**

Yes. If a grantee or subgrantee normally treats lease costs for space needed for specific grants as a direct cost of carrying out the grant, rather than a component of its indirect cost pool, and this is reflected in their indirect cost rate, then the EPA would consider these costs programmatic rather than administrative.

**9. Does the applicant have to provide technical assistance to all communities within the geographical area?**

Yes. Applicants must provide technical assistance to communities throughout the entire geographic area for which they are selected unless the technical assistance would duplicate work already being conducted under a separate EPA brownfield grant.

**10. Can applicants provide technical assistance beyond the six subject areas?**

Yes. Proposals must include technical assistance in each of the six general subject areas described in the RFP. Applicants may also propose additional technical assistance beyond the six areas EPA has described.

**11. What type of leverage funds is EPA looking for in this solicitation?**

EPA is looking for leveraged funding that will complement activities related to the project(s) proposed by the applicant. 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. Leveraged funding may include such things as funding to provide additional technical assistance to communities that beyond the TAB program; utilizing/combining the technical assistance provided through the TAB program with that provided by other programs in order to provide a more robust comprehensive technical assistance program for communities; or use of another organization's facilities, outreach network, or services when providing technical assistance workshops, design charettes, or other technical assistance forums.