

OVERVIEW SECTION

AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: “Brownfields Conferences Co-Sponsorship 2013-2017”

ACTION: Request for Proposals (RFP) – Initial Announcement

RFA NO: EPA-OSWER-OBLR-12-02

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CDFA) NO.: 66.814

DATES: The closing date and time for submission and receipt of proposals is February 10, 2012, 5:00 p.m. ET. Proposals submitted through <http://www.Grants.gov> must be received by February 10, 2012, 5:00 p.m. ET. Proposals submitted in hard copy, as described in *Section IV.C* of this announcement, must be post marked (or the equivalent) by February 10, 2012. Because of the unique situation involving U.S. mail screening, EPA highly recommends that applicants submitting a proposal in hard copy use a courier service or express mail option to transmit their proposals.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the availability of funds and solicits proposals from eligible entities (as defined at Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) 104(k)(1)) and non-profit organizations for financial assistance to assist non-federal personnel (states, tribes, local governments, non-profits, industry and community groups) in participating in three national Brownfields conferences to be planned and held over a five-year period, beginning in 2012. The Brownfields conferences provide training, research and technical assistance to communities to facilitate the inventory of brownfield sites, site assessments and remediation of brownfield sites, community involvement, and site preparation. The successful applicant will be the primary non-federal co-sponsor for the conference and EPA will be the primary federal co-sponsor.

Note to Applicants: If you name sub awardees/sub grantees and/or contractors (including consultants) in your proposal who may assist you with the proposed project, pay careful attention to the information in Section II. F. and G. regarding the types of sub awards/sub grants EPA allows and the need to follow competitive procurement procedures to select contractors.

FUNDING/AWARD: The total estimated funding available under this competitive opportunity (excluding program income from registration fees) is approximately \$900,000. EPA anticipates awarding one cooperative agreement under this announcement to support three conferences. The cooperative agreement will be funded incrementally and the Agency anticipates the performance period will begin on or about March 1, 2012 and extend until September 30, 2016. In FY2012, EPA anticipates that the amount of funding will not exceed \$150,000. Additional funds may be added in each subsequent year of the agreement, subject to satisfactory performance, the availability of funds, and other applicable considerations. (*Refer to Section II.B*)

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Section I – Funding Opportunity Description

A. Background.

In the early 1990s, stakeholders expressed their concerns to EPA about the problems associated with brownfields across the country. More than 450,000 properties that were once used for industrial, manufacturing, or commercial purposes 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, 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.

One of the major efforts under EPA's Brownfields Program is to build partnerships and outreach among federal agencies, states, tribes, municipalities, communities, and other entities. For the past several years, EPA has brought together various stakeholders from all areas of government, communities, and business to exchange ideas about brownfields assessment, cleanup and redevelopment through a national Brownfields conference. As authorized by EPA Ethics Advisory 96-15, the Agency has co-sponsored 15 annual Brownfields conferences, with attendance growing each year, from more than 500 attendees in 1996 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to over 5,000 in attendance at the 2011 conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Co-sponsoring Brownfields conferences will be a challenging experience requiring significant amounts of coordination with EPA and its contractor, other federal agencies, and non-federal stakeholders. The Agency uses an EPA contractor to obtain logistical support (e.g. facilities, registration, audio visual, hotel agreements) for the conference. EPA may charge a registration fee for Brownfields conferences.

The Agency funds a "lead" non-federal co-sponsor to assist states, tribes, local governments, non-profits, industry and community groups participate in this national conference and to ensure that

the content of the technical program serves the interests of the non-federal stakeholders. The Agency will provide the successful applicant mailing lists and other conference related materials and data produced for previous Brownfields conferences. EPA will provide financial assistance to the lead non Federal co-sponsor to promote research, provide training and technical assistance, and explore solutions on brownfields topics such as:

- Brownfields assessment policies and technologies
- Brownfields cleanup policies and technologies
- Brownfields redevelopment activities
- Environmental insurance
- Community engagement activities for finding solutions to brownfields challenges
- Sustainability of Brownfield's revitalization, greenspace preservation, and site preparation for green Buildings
- Financing brownfields assessment, cleanup, and subsequent redevelopment activities
- Community involvement
- Environmental justice relating to brownfields revitalization.
- Health impacts of brownfields
- Best practices for brownfields revitalization at the state, tribal and local levels of government
- Best practices for industry and community groups interested in brownfield revitalization

Applicants may also propose other brownfields- related topics for the conferences.

B. Project Description.

EPA's Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization is soliciting proposals from eligible entities as defined in Section III to serve as the lead non-Federal co-sponsor for National Brownfields conferences over the next five years. The location of the 2013 Brownfields conference will be Atlanta, Georgia. The locations for the other two conferences will be determined jointly by EPA and the successful applicant. Funds awarded under this announcement will provide financial support to a non-Federal co-sponsor to: (1) make substantive contributions to the development of the conference technical program; (2) conduct conference outreach directed towards non-federal attendees; (3) ensure diverse attendance by non-federal stakeholders; and (4) evaluate conference results.

As noted above, EPA obtains logistical support for the Brownfields conferences from an Agency contractor. EPA's contractor may provide "in kind assistance" to the successful applicant to facilitate generation of program income through registration fees.¹ Although the successful applicant must have experience with managing large conferences its role as the non-federal co-sponsor is to provide substantive expertise on brownfields issues, the development of an effective agenda, the identification of appropriate speakers, and the marketing of the conference to non

¹ Program income refers to revenue a recipient obtains from an activity supported by federal financial assistance under 40 CFR 30.2(x) and 30.24 or 40 CFR 31.25 as appropriate. The Agency may allow its logistics contractor to charge a registration fee for future Brownfields conferences, a portion of which the contractor will collect on behalf of EPA's cosponsor for use as program income. EPA will authorize the successful applicant to use the program income for eligible and allowable activities relating to Stakeholder Involvement as described in section I B.3. below.

federal stakeholders, rather than logistical services.

The Brownfields Law requires that EPA consider certain factors when ranking grant applications. These factors are incorporated into the following guidance to applicants for describing their project. At a minimum, the applicant's proposal must address the following areas:

1. **Technical Program**

Technical program information typical of conferences in prior years is included in Appendix A for your reference. This information is provided to give applicants an understanding of the scope, scale and organization of previous conferences for assistance in planning your proposal. Applicants are not required to duplicate the format or approach taken in prior conferences, and are encouraged to propose alternatives that will enhance the effectiveness of the technical program.

- Describe your method for developing the technical program for Brownfields conferences, including: developing of conference theme, topics, and sessions, and managing the call for presentations.
- Describe your method for developing a technical program for a national audience of diverse stakeholders from the various submissions that will result from the call for presentations.
- Describe your process for organizing and securing non-federal speakers for the plenary sessions. Please note, other organizations (including EPA) will be involved with organizing these sessions. Describe how you will coordinate your efforts with other organizations to prevent miscommunication and duplication of effort in organizing the plenary sessions.
- Describe your process for selection and compensation of non-federal speakers and moderators for the conference.
- Describe how the conferences will be used as a forum to address/facilitate the identification and/or reduction of threats to the health and welfare of sensitive populations (e.g., children, pregnant women, minority or low-income communities).
- Describe how the conference will promote sustainable reuse of brownfields and prevent the creation of future brownfields. Describe how you will incorporate sustainable reuse themes into the conferences and how it will foster protection and restoration of the quality of the natural environment, improve the quality of life for the community, broaden prospects for future generations, and help reduce resource consumption.
- Describe how the conferences will incorporate educational information that will stimulate economic development, including the creation of jobs, capital investment, and increases to the local tax base in brownfields communities.
- Describe your process for ensuring a diverse and applicable educational program agenda that will blend the priorities of EPA and non-federal stakeholders related to current and relevant brownfields and land revitalization topics.

2. Outreach

- Describe your process for designing and implementing a full-scale marketing strategy to ensure widespread communication about the conference purpose, technical program, and participants. Describe how this marketing strategy will be developed and implemented early in the conference planning stages and consistently adhered to throughout the planning stages and at the conference.
- Describe your ideas for designing an effective and informative website for the conference.
- Describe your plan for using social media to market the conference.
- Describe your process for creating and placing conference advertisements in your professional journals, newsletters, and Internet site as well as newspapers, magazines, and other media outlets.
- Describe your process for sharing the created material with other co-sponsors, as they are made available.
- Describe how you will prepare printing materials (i.e., press releases, drop-in ads, and brochures) regarding the conferences, as well as creating and maintaining a web site with links to EPA and the other co-sponsors for the conferences.
- EPA recognizes that outreach strategies and processes may change from year to year. Describe how you will incorporate lessons learned from a particular conference year into your outreach strategies for subsequent years.

3. Stakeholder Involvement (including travel scholarship program)

- Describe your process to ensure that a diverse stakeholder base participates in and attends the conferences. This would include representatives from urban and rural revitalization organizations, environmental grassroots organizations, environmental cleanup technology industries, economic revitalization organizations, insurance, banking, and other financial industries.
- For the conferences under this agreement, describe your approach to managing a travel scholarship program, including criteria for selection, reimbursement rates, distribution of resources, and payments to recipients. Please note that travel scholarships may not be given to federal employees and EPA will not select travel scholarship recipients.
- Describe the extent to which the depth and breadth of stakeholder involvement at the conferences will stimulate creative thinking on how to identify and attract private funds for environmental assessment or remediation, and subsequent reuse, of an area in which one or more brownfields properties are located.
- Describe the extent to which the conferences will provide for involvement of local communities in the process of making decisions relating to cleanup and future use of a brownfields property.
- Describe how your organization would ensure appropriate and adequate media coverage before, during, and after the conferences.
- Describe your approach to providing an exhibit hall and your proposed financing arrangements. Please note that if you use EPA funding for an exhibit hall, any fees collected from commercial vendors and other exhibitors will be subject to EPA grant

- regulations governing program income (40 CFR 30.24 and 40 CFR 31.25).²
- Describe your approach to managing independent events sponsored by non-federal stakeholders. Please note that EPA funds may not be used for entertainment (i.e., receptions) and that these independent events must be privately financed.
 - Describe how you would use program income from registration fees to finance stakeholder involvement, including participation of the local community and travel scholarships.

4. Conference Evaluation

- Describe how you will collect information from conference participants to evaluate performance and content and use results for subsequent conferences. It is expected that information will be collected and analyzed for subsequent conferences.

NOTE: EPA’s logo may only be used for factual publicity for the Brownfields conferences. Factual publicity includes dates, times, locations, purposes, agendas, fees, and speakers involved in the event. Such factual publicity shall not imply that the involvement of EPA in the event serves as an endorsement of the general policies, activities or products of the recipient. Where confusion could result, publicity should be accompanied by a disclaimer to the effect that no endorsement is intended. **EPA must clear all publicity materials for the event that uses EPA’s name and/or logo with the recipient’s.**

C. Eligible Use 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, no-federal travel, and transportation expenses.

D. Ineligible Use of Funds.

The successful applicant may not use EPA financial assistance for entertainment (including receptions), fundraising, lobbying or other expenses that are unallowable costs under applicable OMB Cost Principals. Please refer to 2 CFR Part 215 (universities) 2 CFR Part 220 (governments) and 2 CFR Part 225 (non-profit organizations).

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:

1. Projects that duplicate grants awarded under other EPA Brownfields grant programs described in CFDA Nos. 66.818, “Brownfields Assessment, Revolving Loan Funds, and Cleanup Grants” and 66.815, “Brownfields Job Training Grant” or other federally funded environmental training, research, or technical assistance programs in their target community (ies). Please see the EPA’s Brownfields website for more details, <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>.

² The registration fee EPA’s contractor may charge will be for attendees only.

2. Conducting site assessments or actual cleanups outside the context of program.
3. Construction and land acquisition.
4. Foreign travel.
5. Federal cost-share requirement (for example, a cost share required by other federal funds) unless authorized by statute.
6. 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.
7. The payment of an administrative cost. The administrative cost prohibition is required by CERCLA 104(k)(4)(B)(i)(ii) and EPA may not waive this requirement. In implementing the administrative cost prohibition, EPA has made a distinction between prohibited administrative costs and eligible programmatic costs as described below.

a. **Administrative Costs. Prohibited administrative costs are all indirect costs under OMB Circulars codified at 2 CFR Part 215 (universities) 2 CFR Part 220 (governments) and 2 CFR Part 225 (non-profit organizations) and subpart 31.2 (Commercial Organizations) of the Federal Acquisition Regulation.** Indirect costs incurred by a recipient’s contractor under cost-reimbursement contracts for otherwise eligible programmatic costs are not subject to the administrative cost prohibition. Prohibited administrative costs also include direct costs including those in the form of salaries, benefits, contractual costs, supplies, and data processing charges incurred to comply with most provisions of the “Uniform Administrative Requirements or Grants” contained in 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR Part 31. Direct costs for grant administration are ineligible even if the grantee or subgrantee is required to carry out the activity under the grant agreement.

Ineligible grant administration costs include expenses for:

- i. Preparation of proposals for Brownfields grants and sub-grants;
- ii. Record retention required under 40 CFR 30.53 and 40 CFR 31.42;
- iii. Record-keeping associated with supplies and equipment purchases required under 40 CFR 30.33, 30.34, and 30.35 and 40 CFR 31.32 and 31.33;
- iv. Preparing revisions and changes in the budgets, scopes of work, program plans and other activities required under 40 CFR 30.25 and 40 CFR 31.30;
- v. Maintaining and operating financial management systems required under 40 CFR 30.20 and 40 CFR 31.20;
- vi. Preparing payment requests and handling payments under 40 CFR 30.22 and 40 CFR 31.21;
- vii. Non-federal audits required under 30 CFR 30.26, 40 CFR 31.26, and OMB Circular A-133;
- viii. Close out under 40 CFR 30.71 and 40 CFR 31.50.

b. **Programmatic Costs.** EPA has determined that the administrative cost prohibition does not apply to “programmatic” costs, (i.e. costs for activities that are integral to achieving the purpose of the grant), even if the Agency considered the costs to be “administrative” under the prior Brownfields Program.

- i. Direct costs, as defined in the applicable OMB Cost Principle Circular, for the following programmatic activities are not subject to the administrative cost prohibition. These costs, however, must be allowable under the scope of work for the grant. Costs incurred for complying with procurement provisions of 40 CFR Part 30 and Part 31 are considered eligible programmatic costs only if the procurement contract is for services or products that are direct costs for technical assistance as described above. Costs for performance and financial reporting are essential programmatic tools for both the recipient and EPA to ensure that grants are carried out in accordance with statutory and regulatory requirements. The Agency has determined that performance and financial reporting costs are programmatic rather than administrative. Please note, however, that if your organization normally charges performance or financial reporting as indirect costs you may not charge them directly to brownfields due to the requirement for consistent charging of direct and indirect costs in the OMB Circulars.
- ii. If your organization intends to provide noncompetitive subgrants to other nonprofit or governmental organizations, discuss the process you will follow to ensure that these agreements meet the standards for financial assistance contained in OMB Circular A-133, Section.210.

Please note that if a proposal includes within its proposed project description and proposed budget “ineligible activities and costs,” as described above, the proposal may be found to be ineligible for consideration depending on the extent to which it includes such ineligible activities.

E. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage

EPA’s Strategic Plan defines goals, objectives, and sub-objectives for protecting human health and the environment. This grant will support progress toward Goal 3 (Cleaning Up Communities and Advancing Sustainable Development), Objective 3.1 (Promote Sustainable and Livable Communities). Specifically, the grant will help sustain, clean up, and restore communities and the ecological systems that support them by providing training and networking opportunities to assist communities and non-profits in learning how to assess and clean up brownfield sites. (View EPA’s Strategic Plan on the Internet at <http://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan.html>).

F. Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outputs/Outcomes

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

1. **Outcomes.** The term “outcome” refers 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 within an assistance agreement funding period.

EPA anticipates outcomes from the project expected to be awarded under this announcement will include increasing the capacity of governmental entities, nonprofit organizations, and brownfields stakeholders to:

- a. increase the assessment, cleanup, and reuse of brownfields;
 - b. better inform and equip communities with capacity to effectively address and be involved in brownfields 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;
 - e. Enable communities to stimulate economic and other beneficial reuses of brownfields 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 project expected to be awarded under this announcement will include:

- a. Three Brownfields conferences expected during the performance period for the cooperative agreement.
- b. An increase in new attendees to each conference held during the performance period,
- c. Positive feedback in evaluations from the technical portion of the conference program.

G. 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 II – Award Information.

A. What is the amount of available funding?

The total estimated funding available under this competitive opportunity (excluding program income from registration fees) is approximately \$900,000, subject to the availability of funds, quality of proposals received, and other applicable considerations. The cooperative agreement awarded will be funded incrementally over the performance period (see II E, below). EPA expects to award approximately \$120,000 in Fiscal Year 2012. Additional funds may be added in each subsequent year of the agreement, subject to satisfactory performance, availability of funds, and other applicable considerations.

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 make no awards under this announcement.

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

EPA anticipates award of one cooperative agreement with a total estimated funding amount of \$900,000 resulting from this competitive opportunity.

C. Type of Agreement

Cooperative agreements permit substantial involvement between the EPA Project Officer and the selected applicant in the performance of the work supported. Although EPA will negotiate precise terms and conditions relating to substantial involvement as part of the award process for projects they have selected for development, the anticipated substantial federal involvement for these projects will consist of:

1. Close monitoring of the applicant's performance to verify the expected results proposed by the applicant;
2. Collaboration during performance of the scope of work;
3. Review any proposed changes to work plan and/or budget;
4. Review proposed procurements in accordance with 40 CFR 30.44(e) and 40 CFR 31.36(g);
5. Approving qualifications of key personnel (EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the award recipient);
6. Review and comment on reports prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient); and
7. Review and concurrence on project outputs for consistency with the EPA approved scope of work.

D. Will the proposals be partially funded?

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals/applications by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a proposal/application, 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.

E. What is the project period for the award resulting from this solicitation?

The estimated start date for the project resulting from this solicitation is March 1, 2012. It is expected to end on September 30, 2016. EPA expects that three Brownfields conferences will take place during this project period. All project activities must be completed within the negotiated project performance period.

F. Can funding be used to acquire services or fund partnerships?

EPA awards funds to one eligible applicant as the recipient even if other eligible applicants are named as partners or co-applicants or members of a coalition or consortium. The recipient is accountable to EPA for the proper expenditure of funds.

Funding may be used to provide subgrants or subawards of financial assistance, which includes using subawards or subgrants to fund partnerships, provided the recipient complies with applicable requirements for subawards or subgrants including those contained in 40 [CFR](#) Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate. Applicants must compete contracts for services and products, including consultant contracts, and conduct cost and price analyses, to the extent required by the procurement provisions of the regulations at 40 [CFR](#) Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. Applicants are not required to identify subawardees/subgrantees and/or contractors (including consultants) in their proposal/application. However, if they do, the fact that an applicant selected for award has named a specific subawardee/subgrantee, contractor, or consultant in the proposal/application EPA selects for funding does not relieve the applicant of its obligations to comply with subaward/subgrant and/or competitive procurement requirements as appropriate. Please note that applicants may not award sole source contracts to consulting, engineering or other firms assisting applicants with the proposal solely based on the firm's role in preparing the proposal/application.

Successful applicants cannot use subgrants or subawards to avoid requirements in EPA grant regulations for competitive procurement by using these instruments to acquire commercial services or products from for-profit organizations to carry out its assistance agreement. The nature of the transaction between the recipient and the subawardee or subgrantee must be consistent with the standards for distinguishing between vendor transactions and subrecipient assistance under Subpart B Section 210 of OMB Circular A-133, and the definitions of subaward at 40 [CFR](#) 30.2(ff) or subgrant at 40 [CFR](#) 31.3, as applicable. EPA will not be a party to these transactions. Applicants acquiring commercial goods or services must comply with the competitive procurement standards in 40 [CFR](#) Part 30 or 40 [CFR](#) Part 31.36 and cannot use a subaward/subgrant as the funding mechanism.

G. How will an applicant's proposed subawardees or contractors be considered during the evaluation process described in *Section V* of this announcement?

Section V of the announcement describes the evaluation criteria and evaluation process that will be used by EPA to make selections under this announcement. During this evaluation, except for those criteria that relate to the applicant's own qualifications, past performance, and reporting

history, the review panel will consider, as appropriate and relevant, the qualifications, expertise, and experience of:

- (i) an applicant's named subawardees/subgrantees identified in the proposal/application if the applicant demonstrates in the proposal/application that if it receives an award that the subaward/subgrant will be properly awarded consistent with the applicable regulations in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31. For example, applicants must not use subawards/subgrants to obtain commercial services or products from for profit firms or individual consultants.
- (ii) an applicant's named contractor(s), including consultants, identified in the proposal/application if the applicant demonstrates in its proposal/application that the contractor(s) was selected in compliance with the competitive Procurement Standards in 40 [CFR](#) Part 30 or 40 [CFR](#) 31.36 as appropriate. For example, an applicant must demonstrate that it selected the contractor(s) competitively or that a proper non-competitive sole-source award consistent with the regulations will be made to the contractor(s), that efforts were made to provide small and disadvantaged businesses with opportunities to compete, and that some form of cost or price analysis was conducted. EPA may not accept sole source justifications for contracts for services or products that are otherwise readily available in the commercial marketplace.

EPA will not consider the qualifications, experience, and expertise of named subawardees/subgrantees and/or named contractor(s) during the proposal/application evaluation process unless the applicant complies with these requirements.

Section III – Eligibility Information and Threshold Criteria.

A. Eligible Entities.

Proposals will be accepted from a general purpose local unit of government; a 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; a governmental entity created by a state legislature; a regional council or group of general purpose units of local government; a redevelopment agency that is chartered or otherwise sanctioned by a state; an Indian tribe (other than Alaska), or an Alaskan Native Regional Corporation and an Alaska Native Village Corporation as those terms are defined in the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 USC 1601 and following); and the Metlakatla Indian Community.

Nonprofit organizations are also eligible to apply. 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 USC 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 proposal is submitted. For profit firms are not eligible to apply for funding under this announcement.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching.

Cost-sharing or matching is required as a condition of eligibility for award and applicants must provide a cost-share of at least 10% of the amount of EPA funding they request. In addition to the required cost-share, applicants may propose other additional voluntary financial or in-kind commitment of resources (e.g., leveraging) that may improve their scoring under the “*Leveraging*” evaluation criterion in Section V of this solicitation.

The applicant’s required cost share will be governed under 40 [CFR](#) 30.23 or 40 [CFR](#) 31.24, as applicable. Applicants must propose eligible and allowable costs to meet the cost share requirement. For example, prohibited administrative costs are not eligible for cost share purposes. The successful applicant may charge reasonable exhibit fees and use that fee as program income under 40 [CFR](#) 30.24(b)(2) or 40 [CFR](#) 31.25(g)(3) to meet its cost share requirement. Any excess program income will be added to the amount of EPA funds to be used for eligible and allowable costs as provided in 40 CFR 30.24(b)(1) or 40 CFR 31.25(g)(2).

Leveraging

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 and any required cost-share. Any leveraged funds/resources, and their source, must be identified in the proposal (See Section IV of the announcement). Leveraged funds and resources may take various forms as noted below.

Voluntary cost share is a form of leveraging. Under this solicitation, voluntary cost sharing is when an applicant voluntarily proposes to legally commit to provide costs or contributions to support the project above the required cost-share. 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 (40 CFR 30.23 or 40 CFR 31.24, 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 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31 as applicable.

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 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31 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. Applicants that meet the threshold criteria will then be evaluated based on the factors disclosed in *Section V.A), Evaluation Criteria*. The threshold criteria are:

1. Proposals must address all four areas described in Section I.B, Project Description, including “Technical Program,” “Outreach,” “Stakeholder Involvement,” and “Conference Evaluation.”
2. Proposals must demonstrate how the applicant will meet the minimum 10% cost-share as described in *Section III.B, Cost Sharing or Matching*, of this announcement.
3. Proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in *Section IV* of this announcement or else they will be rejected. However, where a page limit is expressed in *Section IV* with respect to the proposal, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.

In addition, proposals must be postmarked or received through <http://www.Grants.gov>, as specified in *Section IV* of this announcement, on or before the proposal submission deadline published in *Section IV* of this announcement. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their proposal reaches the designated person/office specified in *Section IV* of the announcement by the submission deadline.

Proposals postmarked or received after the submission deadline will be considered late and returned to the sender without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling or because of technical issues associated with grants.gov. Applicants should confirm receipt of their proposal with Patricia Overmeyer of EPA’s Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization as soon as possible after the submission deadline—failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

4. All proposal and application materials must be submitted in English.
5. If a proposal includes within its proposed project description and proposed budget

“ineligible activities and costs,” as described above, the proposal may be found to be ineligible for consideration depending on the extent to which it includes such ineligible activities.

Section IV – Application and Submission Information

A. How to Obtain an Application Package.

Applicants may download individual grant application forms, or electronically request a paper application package and an accompanying computer CD of information related to applicants/grant recipients roles and responsibilities from EPA’s Grants and Debarment website by visiting: <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/how-to-apply.htm>.

To download a copy of this solicitation from the Internet, go to: <http://www.epa.gov/oswer/grants-funding.htm>.

B. Content and Form of Application.

The following documents are required for all proposal packages, irrespective of the mode of submission. All packages must contain a “Narrative Proposal,” and one completed and signed Standard Form 424 (SF 424), “Application for Federal Assistance.” The Narrative Proposal, a maximum of 25 single-spaced pages in length, must explicitly describe the applicant’s proposed project (See Section I), and specifically address each of the evaluation criteria disclosed in *Section V.A, Evaluation Criteria* and the applicable threshold eligibility criteria in *Section III.C*.

- 1. Standard Form 424(SF-424), Application for Federal Assistance, with original signature.**

Individual grant application forms may be downloaded from EPA’s Grants and Debarment website by visiting: <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm>.

- 2. Narrative Proposal.**

Narrative Proposals must be concise, well organized, and not exceed 25 typed, single-line spaced, 8 1/2 x 11” pages. The Narrative Proposal must provide the information detailed in this section and **include responses to all applicable *Section III.C Threshold Criteria, Section V.A Evaluation Criteria, as well as the information identified in Section I.B, Project Description.*** Factual information about your proposed project must be provided. Do not include discussions of broad principles that are not specific to the proposed work or project covered by your proposal. **Responses to evaluation criteria should include the criteria number and title but need not restate the entire text of the criteria.** Sufficient detail must be provided to allow for an evaluation of the merits of the proposal. Vague descriptions, redundancy, and failure to address the selection criteria will result in a lower ranking.

The Narrative Proposal (*sections “a” and “b” below*) must substantially conform to the following outline and content:

- a. **Cover letter.** The cover letter must include a brief description of your project, 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:
 - 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;
 - ii. **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 proposal. These individuals may be contacted if other information is needed.
 - iii. **Cooperative Partners.** Provide names and phone numbers of individuals and organizations that have agreed to participate in the implementation of the project, if any;
 - iv. **Funding Requested.** Specify the amount you are requesting from EPA.
 - v. **Date Submitted.**

- b. **Detailed Project Description.** The project description should provide the information requested below on how the applicant will implement and conduct its project and discuss how the proposal addresses each of the evaluation criteria in *Section V* of this announcement. The detailed project description must substantially conform to the following outline and content:
 - i. **Project Description.** Summarize your overall vision for the EPA co-sponsored Brownfields conference and your strategy to accomplish the overall vision to make the conference a relevant and valuable experience for new and returning attendees. Please refer to Section I. B for matters that must be described in your proposal.
 - ii. **Organizational Knowledge/Experience/Expertise.** Summarize your organization’s knowledge about brownfields issues and challenges and your organization’s experience with working with communities and engaging them in successfully dealing with these challenges. Provide information on your organizational experience and plan for successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources (or the ability to obtain them) to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. Identify all proposed partnerships and stakeholder groups that will be involved in the project. Describe what each group’s role will be in the project staffing, funding, design, and implementation. If you name an organization that you intend to receive EPA funding, please pay careful attention to the information in Section II. F. and G. regarding the types of sub awards/sub grants EPA allows and the need to follow competitive procurement procedures to select contractors (including consultants).

iii. **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 5 agreements, and preferably EPA agreements) and describe (i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements 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 these factors in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current/prior grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided 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 factors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

iv. **Leveraging.** Summarize the voluntary dollars or other resources leveraged for this project. Demonstrate 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 and any required cost share for applicants specified in Section III of the announcement to carry out the proposed project(s) and/or that EPA funding will complement activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. Describe the type and amount of leveraging proposed, 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.

v. **Outreach.** Describe your organization's experience in designing and implementing full-scale marketing strategies for large conferences. Include a summary of how your marketing strategies were developed, when the strategies were implemented, and how the strategies ensured widespread communication on the conference purpose and technical program to the targeted audience. Also include a summary of how your strategies addressed the effective use of professional journals, newsletters, the Internet, and websites to advertise conferences and solicit attendance at the conferences. Describe how you may

have changed your previous communications strategies to incorporate lessons learned from previous conference experiences.

- vi. **Stakeholder Involvement (including travel scholarship programs).** Describe your organization's process for ensuring that a diverse stakeholder base participates in the development of the conference program and attends the conference. Please also describe your experience in employing a scholarship program to provide for the participation and attendance of stakeholder groups with limited travel resources.

Describe your experience and approach for ensuring appropriate and adequate media coverage for large scale conferences. Include a description of how you target media coverage to ensure maximum participation of diverse and interested stakeholders.

Also describe your process for managing conference exhibit halls and how your process encourages diverse stakeholder attendance and participation in conference events.

- vii. **Conference Evaluation.** Describe your experience in collecting information from conference participants to evaluate program content, speaker and moderator performance, and overall organization of educational sessions. Describe your experience in analyzing and using the results of participant evaluations to improve the performance of future conferences.

- viii. **Performance Measurement: Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs.**

Anticipated Outcomes. Specify the expected environmental outcomes from your project, including those described in *Section I.D, Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs* of this announcement. Discuss how you propose to track and measure your progress in achieving the project outcomes and results. (*Refer to Section V.A, Evaluation Criteria, Performance Measurement.*)

Anticipated Outputs. Identify the expected project outputs, including those described in *Section I.D, Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs* of this announcement, and describe how you will track and measure your progress in achieving the expected project outputs. Outputs, quantitative or qualitative, must be measurable during the project performance period.

3. **Attachments.** The following documents should be included as attachments to the narrative proposal. **These documents will not count as part of the 25 page limit. Please note that EPA will not consider other attachments.**

- a. **Budget/Resources.** Provide a detailed itemized budget proposal that clearly explains

how EPA funds will be used and how you propose to meet the 10% cost share requirement. The budget should include information on each major task broken out using the following cost elements. For each major task indicate what portion of the cost EPA grant funds will be used and what portion the applicant will provide through cost sharing or other partners will fund as leveraged resources.

- i. Personnel
- ii. Fringe Benefits
- iii. Travel
- iv. Equipment
- v. Supplies
- vi. Contractual Costs
- vii. Other Costs (Be specific. Applicants must include sub awards/sub grants here)
- viii. Total Direct Costs

Management Fees: When formulating budgets for proposals, applicants must not include management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs or at the rate provided for by the terms of the agreement negotiated with EPA. 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 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.

Sample Format for Budget

Budget Categories	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5	Task 6	Total
Personnel							
Equipment							
Supplies							
Contractual							
Other (specify including sub awards/sub grants)							
Total							

- b. **Letters of support, commitment, or partnership from other government or private entities.** The applicant should demonstrate willingness of participation from the city and state government in which the conference will be held. All conference locations will be determined jointly by EPA. Please see Section II.E for requirements relating to transferring EPA funds to other organizations.
- c. **Documentation/evidence of current non-profit status** under Federal, state, or tribal law, as applicable.

C. Submitting an Application Package.

Applicants may choose to submit proposal packages, as described in Section IV.B above, either in hard copy (paper) format or through <http://www.Grants.gov> with an electronic signature. Proposal instructions for all methods are detailed below. Please select only one method. The closing date and time for applicants to submit proposals under this announcement is February 10, 2012, 5:00 p.m. ET. Proposals submitted in hard-copy, as described below, must be postmarked (or the equivalent) by February 10, 2012. Proposals submitted electronically must be submitted via grants.gov by 5:00 p.m. on February 10, 2012.

1. **Hard copy (paper) submission.** Submit a complete proposal package including all of the documents identified in *Section IV.B* of this announcement. **The complete proposal package must be sent through regular (U.S. Postal Service), express mail, or commercial delivery service to the EPA contact listed in Section VII.A, Agency Contact.** Paper submission must include one original signature document and two copies of the completed Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424), the Narrative Proposal, and all Attachments. Please also include a CD-disk with electronic copies of all the documents, if possible.

Because of the unique situation involving U.S. mail screening, EPA highly recommends that applicants use an express mail or commercial delivery service option to transmit their proposal to the physical address of the EPA contact listed below. (*Refer to Section VII.A, Agency Contact.*)

2. **Grants.gov submission.** Using <http://www.Grants.gov>, applicants may submit the complete proposal package on-line with no hard copy or computer disks. If you have any technical difficulties while applying electronically, please call the toll free Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 or contact Patricia Overmeyer at 202 566-2774 or Overmeyer.patricia@epa.gov.

If you wish to apply electronically via <http://www.Grants.gov>, the electronic submission of your proposal package must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov. For more information, go to <http://www.Grants.gov> and click on **“Get Registered” on the left side of the page.** *Note that the registration process may take a week or longer to complete.* If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an Authorized Official Representative (AOR) and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

To begin the proposal process under this grant announcement, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Apply for Grants” tab on the left side of the page. Then click on “Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package” to download the compatible Adobe viewer and obtain the application package. **To apply through grants.gov you must use Adobe Reader applications and download the compatible Adobe Reader version ([Adobe Reader applications](#) are available to download for free on the Grants.gov website. For more information on Adobe Reader please visit the [Help section](#) on**

grants.gov at <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp> or http://www.grants.gov/aboutgrants/program_status.jsp).

Once you have downloaded the viewer, you may retrieve the application package by entering the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-OSWER-OBLR-12-02, or the CFDA number that applies to this announcement (66.814), in the appropriate field. Then complete and submit the application package as indicated. **You may also be able to access the application package by clicking on the “Application” button at the top right of the synopsis page for this announcement on <http://www.grants.gov> (to find the synopsis page, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Find Grant Opportunities” button on the left side of the page and then go to Search Opportunities/Browse by Agency feature to find EPA opportunities).**

Proposal Submission Deadline. Your organization’s AOR must submit your complete proposal package electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (<http://www.Grants.gov>) no later than February 10, 2012, 5:00 p.m. ET. **Please submit all proposal materials described below.**

Application Materials. The following forms and documents are required under this announcement:

- A. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- B. Narrative Proposal.
- C. Other Attachments

The proposal package must include all of the following materials:

- A. **Standard Form (SF-424), Application for Federal Assistance.** Complete the form. There are no attachments. Please be sure to include organization fax number and email address in Block 5 of the Standard Form SF-424. Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.
- B. **Narrative Proposal** (also referenced as “Project Narrative Attachment Form” on <http://www.Grants.gov>.) Prepare your Narrative Proposal in accordance with the instructions detailed in *Section IV.B, Content and Form of Application Submission* of this announcement (EPA-OSWER-OBLR-12-02). The Narrative Proposal shall not exceed 25 pages and must substantially conform to the outline and content detailed in *Section IV.B.2* of this announcement.
- C. **Attachments.** The project budget, milestones, and letters of support, as described in *Section IV.B.3* of this announcement, shall be included as attachments to the narrative proposal. **These documents will not count as part of the 25 page limit.**

Application Preparation and Submission Instructions.

For Document A, click on the appropriate form and then click “Open Form” below the box. The fields that must be completed will be highlighted in yellow. Optional fields and completed fields will be displayed in white. If you enter an invalid response or incomplete information in a field, you will receive an error message. When you have finished filling out each form, click “Save.” When you return to the electronic “Grant Application Package” page, click on the form you just completed, and then click on the box that says, “Move Form to Submission List.” This action will move the document over to the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

For Document B, you will need to attach electronic files. Prepare your “Narrative Proposal” in accordance with the instructions detailed in *Section IV.B, Content and Form of Application* of this announcement (EPA-OSWER-OBLR-12-02). Save the document to your computer as an MS Word, PDF or WordPerfect file. When you are ready to attach your “Narrative Proposal” to the application package, click on “Project Narrative Attachment Form,” and open the form. Click “Add Mandatory Project Narrative File,” and attach your “Narrative Proposal” (previously saved to your computer) using the browse window that appears. You may then click “View Mandatory Project Narrative File” to view it. Enter a brief descriptive title of your project in the space beside “Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename;” the filename should be no more than 40 characters long.

For Document C, the attachments to the Narrative Proposal identified in Section IV.B.3 of this announcement, you may click “Add Optional Project Narrative File” or use the “Other Attachments” form and proceed as before to attach the attachments. When you have finished attaching the necessary documents, click “Close Form.” When you return to the “Grant Application Package” page, select the “Project Narrative Attachment Form” and click “Move Form to Submission List.” The form should now appear in the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

Once you have finished filling out all of the forms/attachments and they appear in one of the “Completed Documents for Submission” boxes, click the “Save” button that appears at the top of the Web page. It is suggested that you save the document a second time, using a different name, since this will make it easier to submit an amended package later if necessary. Please use the following format when saving your file: “Applicant Name – FY12 - Assoc Prog Supp - 1st Submission” or “Applicant Name - FY 12 Assoc Prog Supp Back-up Submission.” If it becomes necessary to submit an amended package at a later date, then the name of the 2nd submission should be changed to “Applicant Name – FY12 Assoc Prog Supp - 2nd Submission.”

Once your proposal package has been completed and saved, send it to your AOR for submission to U.S. EPA through Grants.gov. Please advise your AOR to close all other software programs before attempting to submit the application package through <http://www.grants.gov>.

In the “Application Filing Name” box, your AOR should enter your organization’s name (abbreviate where possible), the fiscal year (e.g., FY12), and the grant category (e.g., Assoc Prog Supp). The filing name should not exceed 40 characters. From the “Grant Application Package” page, your AOR may submit the application package by clicking the “Submit” button that appears at the top of the page. The AOR will then be asked to verify the agency and funding opportunity number for which the application package is being submitted. If problems are encountered during the submission process, the AOR should reboot his/her computer before trying to submit the application package again. [It may be necessary to turn off the computer (not just restart it) before attempting to submit the package again.] If the AOR continues to experience submission problems, he/she may contact <http://www.grants.gov> for assistance by phone at 1-800-518-4726, or contact Patricia Overmeyer, Grant Program Manager, at Overmeyer.patricia@epa.gov

Proposal materials submitted through <http://www.grants.gov> will be time/date stamped electronically. If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (not from support@grant.gov) within 30 days of the proposal deadline, please contact Patricia Overmeyer at Overmeyer.patricia@epa.gov. Failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

D. Confidential Business Information

EPA recommends that you do not include confidential business information (“CBI”) in your proposal. However, if confidential business information is included, it will be treated in accordance with 40 CFR 2.203. Applicants must clearly indicate which portion(s) of their proposal they are claiming as CBI. EPA will evaluate such claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c) (2) prior to disclosure. The Agency protects competitive proposals from disclosure under applicable provisions of the Freedom of Information Act prior to the completion of the competitive selection process

E. Pre-proposal/Application Assistance and Communications.

In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft proposals, provide informal comments on draft proposals, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their applications/proposals.

EPA will respond to questions in writing from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement. Questions received from applicants and EPA’s responses will also be posted online at <http://www.epa.gov/oswer/grants-funding.htm>.

Section V– 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 Proposal.” Each proposal will be rated under a points system, with a total of 110 points possible.

Criterion	Maximum Points per Criterion
<p>Technical Program. Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent to which the proposal effectively addresses the scope of work activities described for the Technical Program in <i>Section I.B</i> of this announcement. Proposals will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the method for developing the technical program for Brownfields conferences, including: developing of conference theme, topics, and sessions, and managing the call for presentations. (5 pts.) • Describe the process for organizing and securing speakers for the plenary sessions. Please note, other organizations (including EPA) will be involved with organizing these sessions. Describe how you will coordinate your efforts with other organizations to prevent miscommunication and duplication of effort in organizing the plenary sessions. (5 pts.) • Describe the process for selection and compensation of speakers and moderators for the conference technical program. (5 pts.) • Describe the extent to which the approach to sponsoring the conferences’ technical programs will facilitate the use or reuse of existing infrastructure (i.e., use or re-use of knowledge, tools, resources from existing federal programs with an interest in Brownfields). (5 pts.) • Describe: how the conferences will promote sustainable reuse of brownfields and prevent the creation of future brownfields; how you will incorporate sustainable reuse themes into the conferences; and how the conferences will foster protection and restoration of the quality of the natural environment and improve the quality of life for the community. (5 pts.) • 	25
<p>Programmatic Capability and Past Performance. This criterion refers to the technical capability of the applicant to successfully carry out the proposed project taking into account the factors listed below Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account their (5 points for each subfactor): (i) past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.b.iii of the announcement,</p> <p>(ii) history of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.b.ix 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 their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and</p>	20

<p>outcomes under those agreements and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not,</p> <p>(iii) organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and</p> <p>(iv) staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.</p> <p>Note: In evaluating applicants under items i and ii 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 (items i and ii above-a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points-2.5 points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.</p>	
<p>Leveraging of Additional Resources . Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent they demonstrate:</p> <p>(i) how they 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 and the required cost share for applicants specified in Section III of the announcement to carry out the proposed project(s) and/or</p> <p>(ii) that EPA funding will complement activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources.</p> <p>Applicants will also be evaluated based on the type and amount of leveraging proposed, how the applicant 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 resources will play to support the proposed project activities.</p>	10
<p>Outreach. Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the process for designing and implementing a full-scale marketing strategy to ensure widespread communication about the conference purpose, technical program, and participants; and describes how this marketing strategy will be developed and implemented early in the conference planning stages and consistently adhered to throughout the planning stages and at the conference. (10 pts.) • Describe the process for creating and placing conference advertisements 	25

<p>in your professional journals, newsletters, and Internet site as well as newspapers, magazines, and other media outlets. (5 pts.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how the applicant will prepare printing materials (i.e., press releases, drop-in ads, and brochures) regarding the conferences, as well as creating and maintaining a web site with links to EPA and the other co-sponsors for the conferences. (10 pts.) • 	
<p>Stakeholder Involvement (including travel scholarship program). Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the process to ensure that a diverse stakeholder base participates in and attends the conferences through the use of both program income from registration fees and direct EPA financial assistance. This would include representatives from urban and rural revitalization organizations, environmental grassroots organizations, environmental cleanup technology industries, economic revitalization organizations, insurance, banking, and other financial industries. (5 pts.) • Describe the approach to managing a travel scholarship program including, the use of program income as a financing source, criteria for selection, reimbursement rates, distribution of resources, and payments to recipients. Please note that travel scholarships may not be given to federal employees. (5 pts.) • Describe the extent to which the conferences will provide for involvement of local communities in the process of making decisions relating to cleanup and future use of a brownfields property. (5 pts.) • Describe how your organization would ensure appropriate and adequate media coverage before, during, and after the conferences. (5 pts.) • Describe the approach to providing an exhibit hall and your proposed financing arrangements. Please note that if you use EPA funding for an exhibit hall, any fees collected from commercial vendors and other exhibitors will be subject to EPA grant regulations governing program income (40 CFR 30.24 and 40 CFR 31.25). (5 pts.) • 	25
<p>Conference Evaluation. Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which they describe how information from conference participants will be collected to evaluate performance and content and use results for subsequent conferences. It is expected that information will be collected and analyzed for subsequent conferences.</p>	5
<p>Performance Measurement: Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs. Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent to which the proposal realistically describes how the project will lead to measurable environmental results (i.e., amount of pollution prevented; waste reduced, reused, recycled or, resources conserved). Proposals will be evaluated on the quality and extent to which they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly specify anticipated environmental outcomes and outputs as 	15

<p>described in <i>Section I.D, Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs</i>. (5 pts.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. (5 pts.) • Describe the approach for tracking and measuring progress towards achieving the expected project outcomes and outputs including those identified in <i>Section I.D, Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs</i>). (5 pt.) 	
<p>Budget/Resources. Proposals will be evaluated based on the extent that the budget is clearly stated, detailed, and appropriate to achieve the project’s objectives.</p>	<p>10</p>

B. Review and Selection Process

All timely received proposals will first be reviewed to determine eligibility for funding based upon compliance with all threshold criteria listed in *Section III.C*. Only proposals determined to be eligible will be evaluated for technical merit. Each eligible proposal will be evaluated by a review panel of EPA Headquarters and Regional staff for technical merit based on the evaluation factors detailed in *Section V.A* of this solicitation.

EPA regions may provide information to the review panel on an applicant’s response to the Past Performance evaluation criterion. This information may take into account the regional EPA Office’s experience, if any, with the applicant’s performance on grants managed by the region.

Upon completion of the technical merit evaluation, the review panel will give each proposal an evaluated numerical score, with a total of 135 points possible. The evaluated numerical scores will be rank ordered. The review panel will recommend the proposal with the highest evaluated numerical score to the EPA Headquarters Selection Official for award.

The EPA Headquarters Selection Official will make the final funding decision. The selection official’s decision will be based upon the recommendation of the review panel.

Section VI – Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices.

EPA anticipates notification to both successful and unsuccessful applicants will be made, via telephone, electronic, or postal mail by March 25, 2012.

The notification to successful applicant(s) that their proposal has been selected for award is not an authorization to begin performance. EPA reserves the right to negotiate appropriate changes in

work plans after the selection and before the final award consistent with the Agency's Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1, Section 11). The "Award Notice" signed by the EPA Grants Officer is the authorizing document and will be provided through postal mail. At a minimum, this process can take up to 90 days from the date of selection.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. A listing and description of general EPA Regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at:
http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/applicable_epa_regulations_and_description.htm.
2. Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, may be applicable to awards resulting from this announcement. Applicants selected for funding may be required to provide a copy of their proposal to their [State Point of Contact \(SPOC\)](#) for review, pursuant to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. This review is not required with the initial application and not all states require such a review.
3. Grants and cooperative agreements with non-profit organizations and institutions of higher education are subject to 40 CFR Part 30 and OMB Circular A-122 (2 CFR Part 230) for non-profits and A-21 (2 CFR Part 220) for institutions of higher learning. Grants and cooperative agreements with governmental organizations are subject to 40 CFR Part 31 and OMB Circular A-87 (2 CFR Part 225).
4. Programmatic terms and conditions will be negotiated with the selected recipient.

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, difficulties encountered, preliminary data results and a statement of activity anticipated during the subsequent reporting period. A discussion of expenditures 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. Sub-awards and Executive Compensation Reporting

Applicants must ensure that they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the sub-award and executive total compensation reporting requirements established under

OMB guidance at [2 CFR Part 170](#), unless they qualify for an exception from the requirements, should they be selected for funding.

E. Central Contractor Registration (CCR) and Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Requirements

Unless exempt from these requirements under OMB guidance at 2 CFR Part 25 (e.g., individuals), applicants must:

1. Be registered in the CCR prior to submitting an application or proposal under this announcement. CCR information can be found at <https://www.bpn.gov/ccr/>.
2. Maintain an active CCR registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or proposal under consideration by an agency, and
3. Provide its DUNS number in each application or proposal it submits to the agency. 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>.

If an applicant fails to comply with these requirements, it will, should it be selected for award, affect their ability to receive the award.

D. 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) located on the web at:

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/05-1371.htm>. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting the Agency contact identified in *Section VII, Agency Contacts* of this announcement.

E. Pre-Award Administrative Capability Review.

Non-profit applicants that are recommended for funding will be subject to pre-award administrative capability reviews consistent with Sections 8.b, 8.c, and 9.d of EPA Order 5700.8, EPA Policy on Assessing Capabilities of Non-Profit Applicants for Managing Assistance Awards.

Section VII – Agency Contact

A. CONTACT INFORMATION & ADDRESS FOR REGULAR MAIL (USPS)

Patricia Overmeyer, U.S. EPA, Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization (MC 5105-T), 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20460; Phone (202) 566-2774; or email overmeyer.patricia@epa.gov.

B. FOR EXPRESS MAIL/COURIER DELIEVERY (Courier, FedEx, UPS, DHL):

Patricia Overmeyer, U.S. EPA, Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization (MC 5015-T),
1301 Constitution Avenue, NW, EPA West Bldg., Room 2402R, Washington, DC 20004.

Section VIII – Other Information

The applicant selected for award will be required to submit a final cooperative agreement proposal package to the EPA. The package must include an EPA-approved final work plan that describes the work to be performed, including a final budget, and the required certification forms.