Tips for Successful Brownfields Grant Proposals

“Reading between the lines”

Webinar | November 17, 2015

• Ken Brown, NALGEP
• Blase Leven, Kansas State University
• Ignacio Dayrit, Center for Creative Land Recycling
• Elizabeth Limbrick, New Jersey Institute of Technology
Empowering localities to revitalize their communities through the exchange of strategies, tools, and best practices for brownfields reuse
Technical Assistance to Brownfields Communities Program

• Direct technical assistance on full range of brownfields topics -- community involvement, health impacts, finance, liability, redevelopment, and grant writing
• Tools include: workshops and webinars, one-on-one assistance, case studies, web-based tools
• *Training & review of drafts of EPA ARC grant proposals: Contact your TAB now!*
Technical Assistance Providers

New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT)—EPA Regions 1 & 3
Colette Santasieri | 973-642-4165 | santasieri@njit.edu | www.njit.edu/tab

Kansas State University (KSU)—EPA Regions 5, 6, 7 & 8
Blase Leven | 785-532-0780 | baleven@ksu.edu | www.ksutab.org

Center for Creative Land Recycling (CCLR)—EPA Regions 2, 4, 9 & 10
Sarah Sieloff | 415-398-1080 | sarah.sieloff@cclr.org | www.cclr.org
Brownfields and Sample Sites

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.

- Hazardous Materials
  - Auto Shops
  - Salvage Yards
  - Illegal dump sites
  - Dry Cleaners
  - Mine Scarred Lands
  - Illegal Drug Labs

- Petroleum Sites
  - Gas Stations
  - Fuel Terminals
  - Tank Farms

- Commingled
FY2016 Brownfields Grants

**Assessment Grants**
- Inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct planning (including cleanup planning) and community involvement
- $200,000-$600,000
- 151 grants = $34.1M

**RLF Grants**
- Capitalize program for loans and subgrants
- Up to $1M
- 12 grants = $8.5M

**Cleanup Grants**
- Cleanup activities at a specific brownfield site owned by the applicant
- Up to $200,000 per site
- Up to 3 per grantee
- 60 = $11.9M
Benefits of a Brownfields Grant

- **Seed funding** to launch brownfields programs and conduct initial site investigations at priority sites
- **Assessment funding is flexible** – can be used for multiple sites, for reuse planning, health monitoring, brownfields staff, community involvement, and site investigations
- **Funding can be used to leverage other federal, state, and local revitalization funding**
- **Can help achieve multiple community objectives** – e.g., removal of blight, clean-up, transportation improvements, new affordable housing, mixed use development, new parks and open space, waterfront revitalization
Key Changes to FY16 Guidelines

- RLF available this year
- Ranking criteria restructured (minor changes and clearer questions)
- Creation of regional priorities for assessment grants
- Continued emphasis on Livability principles
- Emphasis on leveraging, timeliness of spending and efficiency of tracking
- Streamlined Other Factors Checklist
- Submittal by grants.gov only
- Data requirements for small/rural communities
- Discuss the use or reuse of existing infrastructure
Equitable Development

• Redevelopment should benefit the existing community – not push them out.

• What intentional strategies will you use?
  o Example: To retain residents who have historically lived within the area affected by brownfields you might include inclusionary zoning (affordable housing), rent-control, and/or a community land trust
  o Also consider: improving access by residents to greenspace, recreational spaces, transit, schools, other nonprofit uses, and healthy and affordable food

• Impact discussion
  o Public and environmental health and welfare
  o Real and perceived; nature and extent; direct and indirect; proximity; cumulative

• Consider improving employment opportunities
  o Local or First-Source Hiring (Also mention that you will follow federal procurement rules)
Assessment Grants
$200,000 - $600,000

• Site specific site assessment activities: $200,000-$350,000
• Community-wide: 2 @ $200,000
  o Inventory of sites
  o Phase I & Phase II assessments
  o Reuse, cleanup plans, and community outreach

• Coalition: Up to $600,000
  o Group of 3 or more eligible entities submit proposal under one lead coalition partner
  o Coalition partners cannot have the same jurisdiction unless they are separate legal entities
  o Coalition members are NOT eligible to apply for additional, individual Community-wide or Site-specific assessment grants
  o Must assess a minimum of 5 sites
Assessment Rating
200 Points

- Community Need (50 pts)
  - Description of Brownfields (now 10, was 5)
  - Cumulative Environmental Issues (now 5, was 10)
- Project Description and Feasibility of Success (50 pts)
- Community Engagement and Partnerships (35 pts)
- Project Benefits (25 pts)
- Programmatic Capability and Past Performance (40 pts)
Assessment Grants Tips

- Communitywide or site-specific?
- More points for brownfields description; less on cumulative impacts
- Fifty percent of awards to new grantees
- Discuss past efforts in obtaining technical assistance and resources
- Plan for site prioritization and access challenges
- Partner with your state environmental agency
- Assess your team’s capacity to deliver
- Coalitions
  - Find partners with common goals and commitment
  - Effective governance structure
- Incorporate regional priorities
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Cleanup Grants
Up to $200,000/site

• Funding for cleanup activities: up to three sites

• Application Requirements
  o Phase II or equivalent
  o Draft ABCA complete
  o Community Notification
  o Sole owner of the subject property by Dec 18 (fee simple title)
  o Not responsible party
  o 20% applicant cost share
Cleanup Rating
105 Points

• Community Need (20 pts)
• Project Description and Feasibility of Success (30 pts)
• Community Engagement and Partnerships (15 pts)
• Project Benefits (20 pts)
• Programmatic Capability and Past Performance (20 pts)
Cleanup Grants Tips

• Choose a site and project with impact
• Complete the Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) soon
• Provide early notice and schedule your community meeting before December 4
• EPA will consider alternate ownership arrangement – contact them early
• Consider all the components of the remedial action, including low impact remediation and protection of the community during remediation
• Identify specific in-kind cost share or leveraging sources
• Contact job training or workforce development providers in the area
Revolving Loan Fund Grants
$1M per award

• Funding to capitalize fund for loans and subgrants
• 50% of grants planned to be awarded to “new applicants”
• 20% applicant cost share
• 50% for loan program: loans, marketing, servicing, etc.
RLF Rating
100 Points

- Community Need (15 pts)
- Project Description and Feasibility of Success (30 pts)
- Community Engagement and Partnerships (20 pts, was 15 pts)
- Project Benefits (15 pts, was 20 pts)
- Programmatic Capability and Past Performance (20 pts)
Revolving Loan Fund Grants Tips

• Obtain legal opinions early: Site access/nonperformance and Loan program management

• Assemble a strong team: Program manager, Fund manager and Site manager

• Develop a strong business and management plan: Marketing the program, Competitive loan terms, site prioritization

• Develop a clear cleanup oversight structure

• Contact job training or workforce development providers

• Highlight other funding sources, cost share, leveraging and job opportunities
General Tips

• Address Threshold Criteria ASAP
  o State letter and site eligibility
• Use the *format* requirements! (font, pages, margins, etc.)
• Address each section and subpart – leave no blanks
• Do not assume reviewer understands your region or community, history or “issues” (no local jargon)
• Write “Newspaper style” **important points first!**
• Recheck budget table
• Use TABEZ at www.ksutab.org or www.tabez.org
• Grants.gov and SAM.gov
General Tips (cont.)

• Make a connection and create a story between your needs, impacts, project, and benefits
  • *The indicators in the Needs section should be mitigated by the project and reflected in the benefits section*

• Identify the sustainable and livability aspects of your communities’ policies, plans, and practices
  • *Find the regional plan, general plan and specific plans for your project area, find the sustainable elements, and check for brownfields connections*

• Demonstrate that you can deliver
  • *Identify how and who will deliver and report on outcomes and outputs*
Tips for Small & Rural

• Consider TBA or State / EPA Assistance vs. Grant?
• Regional Development assistance?
• Coalition of small communities?
• One Brownfield vs. area wide (community) approach?
• Still need documented community participation – not the “grapevine”
• Get everyone on board
• The community “Vision” can be critical – is it realistic?
EPA ARC FY16 Timeline

- October 19, 2015 – Guidelines Released
- December 18, 2015 - Proposals due
- Spring 2016 - Selections announced
- June-July 2016 - Work plans finalized
- September 2016 - Grants awarded
Free Technical Assistance

• TAB Program
  o TAB EZ: Template for Drafting EPA Assessment and Cleanup Proposals (www.ksutab.org)
  o Proposal Reviews: Two-week notice; Three – seven day review (sometimes less)

• State Brownfields Programs
  o Letters of Acknowledgement, site-specific eligibility determinations, and other technical assistance

• EPA Regional Brownfields Programs
  o Applicant, site, and site ownership Eligibility determinations
    • Request NOW, if in doubt
  o Regional Webinars
Questions?

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