

Fiscal Year 2016 Frequently Asked Questions for Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grants

EPA prepared these Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and Answers to assist prospective applicants with preparing Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) grant proposals for the FY16 competition. Please review the FY 2016 Proposal Guidelines (also referred to as Request for Proposals (RFP)) published in November 2015 when preparing your proposal. If information in the FAQs differs from information in the statute, regulation, or the Guidelines, then the statute, regulation, or the Guidelines will take precedence. The FAQs will be updated periodically as we continue to receive questions.

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I. Changes to the EWDJT Guidelines

Q1. How have the EWDJT Guidelines Changed?

A. General Changes

EPA has provided the estimated funding amounts for each program office in addition to the available Brownfields funding as shown [below](#). It is important to take these funding amounts into account when planning what training your program will provide and at what level (i.e., awareness or advanced).

The “Other Factors” have also been updated and revised. Several factors were deleted. Please pay careful attention to the Other Factors now listed in the RFP and remember to submit an Other Factors Checklist as one of the required attachments that should be submitted as part of your complete proposal package.

B. Changes to Threshold Criteria

Threshold criteria are evaluated on a pass or fail basis. Applicants who fail to address a threshold criterion may not be provided the opportunity to respond or submit clarifying information. If a threshold criterion is not responded to, the proposal will not be considered for funding.

There are nine threshold criteria, found in Section III.C of the RFP, that need to be met in order for the applicant to be considered in this competition:

1. Applicant Eligibility
2. Demonstration that Proposed Project Does Not Duplicate Other Federally Funded Environmental Job Training Programs.
3. Required HAZWOPER Training
4. Federal Funds Requested/Funding Amount
5. Substantial Conformity with Instructions and Format Requirements
6. Training Curriculum Chart Indicating the Cost of Each Course
7. Target Area and Proposal Submission Requirement
8. Grants.gov Submission Requirement
9. Deadline for Submission of Proposals

Note: Responses to all nine Threshold Criteria must be included in the Transmittal Letter.

For purposes of the threshold eligibility review, EPA may seek clarification of applicant information. Applicants that simply fail to address a threshold criterion may not be provided an opportunity to respond or submit clarifying information so as not to provide an applicant an unfair competitive advantage or to provide the appearance of an unfair competitive advantage over applicants who submit complete proposals. The applicant’s responses to the threshold criteria must be included in the transmittal letter submitted to EPA. See Section IV.C of the RFP for a complete list of required proposal content.

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

In FY16, applicants may not submit multiple proposals, and cannot propose to serve different metropolitan areas. This restriction will allow EPA to more equitably distribute limited EWDJT funds. Applicants, such as those proposing to serve rural areas composed of multiple towns, counties, or cities will be provided more flexibility to serve large geographic areas however. Please note that applicants who received an EWDJT grant from EPA in Fiscal Year 2015 (FY15) are not eligible to apply under this competition. Grantees who received EWDJT funding in FY15 may not apply under this competition under any circumstance, even if the applicant proposes to serve a different city or target area. Applicants who received an EWDJT grant in, or before, Fiscal Year 2014, and who did not receive funding in FY15 as described above, are eligible to apply for funding under this competition.

Proposals must be submitted through www.grants.gov as stated in Section IV of the RFP, except in the limited circumstances where a waiver has been approved in advance.

If an applicant does not have the technical capability to apply electronically through www.grants.gov because of limited or no internet access which prevents them from being able to upload the required application materials to www.grants.gov, the applicant may request a waiver. Instructions for submitting a waiver are provided in the RFP. Applicants must submit a waiver request at least 15 calendar prior to the submission deadline of proposals.

C. Changes to Ranking Criteria

Historically, applicants have provided overall estimates of costs of a training curriculum. In FY16, applicants must provide cost estimates for each course, determine what percentage of their budget is allocated to each training course, and indicate how many times the course will be offered. Without this information, a proposal will not be funded as referenced in the threshold criteria (threshold criterion #6). Training that is ineligible, such as training in construction or carpentry, or life skills training, must not be included in the proposed EPA budget. Please refer to Section V.B of the RFP for more information.

II. General Guidelines and Application Process Questions

Q2. How do I get help in understanding and responding to the FY16 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grant Guidelines?

EPA will be hosting two outreach webinars for prospective applicants that will explain the process of applying for an EWDJT grant and how proposals will be evaluated. These

webinars will be held on December 2, 2015 at 12 pm EST and on December 10, 2015 at 2 pm EST. A copy of the presentation will be available on [EPA's website](#) and a recording of the webinar will be posted once it is complete.

EPA Regional Job Training Coordinators may also provide pre-application assistance to individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility requirements only. Regional staff will not provide assistance to help applicants prepare their responses to ranking or evaluation criteria. Agency personnel will not review drafted proposals. Contact information for each EPA Regional Job Training Coordinator is provided in Section VII of the RFP.

The Hazardous Materials Training and Research Institute (HMTRI), an EPA cooperative agreement recipient that provides technical assistance to prospective EWDJT grant applicants, may also provide assistance to applicants and may be able to review segments of a drafted proposal. Applicants may contact Glo Hanne at HMTRI to request technical assistance at: ghanne@eicc.edu or by calling (563) 441-4081.

Q3. What does the FY16 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training grant application process entail?

To apply for an EWDJT grant, one must submit a proposal through www.grants.gov. In order to use www.grants.gov, one must register their organization, obtain a DUNS number and register with www.sam.gov. This process can take weeks to complete and applicants are strongly encouraged to begin their registration process well before the proposal deadline. For step by step instructions, please reference [applicant resources](#) posted on www.grants.gov or EPA's [tip sheet](#).

The process for applying for an Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training grant consists of submitting a single proposal as discussed in the [FY16 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grant Guidelines](#). EPA is asking eligible applicants to demonstrate that they meet threshold eligibility requirements, to respond to evaluation criteria that will be used to rank proposals, and to provide pertinent attachments described in Section IV of the Guidelines. The closing date and time for submission of proposals is January 14, 2016, 11:59 p.m. EST. See Section IV.B of the Guidelines for submission details.

Q4. How will my proposal be evaluated?

Each proposal undergoes two stages of evaluation. In the first stage, EPA regional staff review the threshold criteria responses. Threshold criteria are evaluated on a pass/fail basis. If a response fails to meet any of the threshold criterion listed in Section III.B, the proposal will be disqualified from further consideration and the applicant will be notified within 15 business days of the determination. However, EPA regional representatives may seek clarification from an applicant regarding its response to a threshold criterion if the information is not clear. Each proposal that passes all threshold criteria will then be evaluated on its responses to the evaluation criteria by a national review panel.

During the second stage of review, evaluation panels comprised of EPA headquarters and regional staff and representatives of other federal agencies will evaluate the ranking criteria outlined in Section V of the Guidelines. The evaluation panel will score each proposal's responses against the ranking criteria. Applicants must make every effort to respond to each and every criterion to the best of their ability, even if it doesn't apply. Scores on each ranking evaluation criterion will be averaged to determine the panel's recommended proposal score. EPA will not seek clarification of responses to any ranking evaluation criteria.

Regional Offices will provide input and a score for the "Programmatic Capability" criterion for proposals originating from within their region. The "Programmatic Capability" criterion will be worth a maximum of 24 points and will be added to the final national panel scores for the remaining ranking criteria. The combined ranking criteria—including "Programmatic Capability"—is worth a maximum total of 100 points.

Under the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act, Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), the highest ranked proposals will be recommended for funding. In making final selection recommendations, EPA's Selection Official may then consider "Other Factors" if, and as, appropriate. The Other Factors for this solicitation are listed in Section V.C of the proposal guidelines.

Q5. What is the maximum amount of money that an applicant may be awarded?

An eligible applicant may apply for up to \$200,000 per grant. The project period for Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training grants is up to three years. Actual funding is dependent upon the availability of funds through the federal budget process and EPA reserves the right to partially fund or make no awards at all.

In FY16, EPA anticipates awarding approximately 17-18 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training grants at a total of \$3.5 million. Of the total \$3,500,000 available, the EPA estimates that the following funding amounts will be available to support the various types of training either at the awareness or advanced level, with the majority of funding being used to support brownfields assessment, cleanup, and hazardous waste related training:

- Brownfields hazardous waste assessment and cleanup training, including petroleum cleanup training: \$3,363,000
- Solid Waste Management or Cleanup training: \$10,000
- Superfund site cleanup and innovative and alternative treatment technologies training: \$25,000
- Wastewater treatment training: \$47,000
- Emergency planning, preparedness, and response training: \$20,000
- Enhanced environmental health and safety training: \$10,000
- Integrated pest management (IPM) training: \$10,000
- Alternative energy technologies: \$15,000

Based on the funding amounts listed above and budget constraints, EPA anticipates being able to only make **1-2 awards that focus on advanced level training in any of the above categories beyond the core brownfield training**. However, depending on the quality of proposals received and what level of training is proposed, EPA may be able to fund several proposals that seek to deliver **awareness**-level training in the categories listed above, given awareness level training generally costs less than advanced training.

EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this competition, consistent with Agency policy, if additional funding becomes available. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months from the date of the original selection decision. EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no awards under this announcement or make fewer awards than anticipated.

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals by funding discrete portions, types of training, or phases of proposed projects. Based on the limited amounts of funding to support certain types of training, EPA may not be able to fund all training courses proposed by an applicant. **Prior to applying, applicants should carefully decide what types of training, and at what level the training will be delivered. Applicants will not have the ability to revise their proposals or alter their training curricula if the proposal is selected for funding and certain types of training are unable to be funded.** To maintain the integrity of the competition and selection process, EPA, if it decides to partially fund a proposal, 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.

Q6. How do I submit my proposal?

All proposals must be submitted electronically through www.grants.gov. Proposals are due by 11:59 Eastern Time on January 14, 2016. Applicants should note that there is a registration process for electronic submission via www.grants.gov which may take a week or more to complete.

Applicants will receive confirmation from www.grants.gov upon completing the online proposal submission process. If you do not receive this confirmation, you are strongly encouraged to contact www.grants.gov to verify if your application was received. Additionally, if you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA within 30 days of the proposal deadline, please contact **Joseph Bruss at 202-566-2772 or bruss.joseph@epa.gov**. Failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

Please refer to Appendix 2 in the FY16 guidelines for more information on the electronic submission process.

Q7. What are the important deadlines?

December 31, 2015	Deadline for submission of grants.gov waiver
January 14, 2016	Deadline for submission of proposals to EPA
February 2016	Applicants who failed to meet “Threshold Criteria” are notified
May 2016	Anticipated announcement of grant selections
August 2016	Grants are awarded; budget and project periods begin

Q8. Would my application be looked upon less favorably if my organization has never received any type of federal or non-federal financial assistance?

No. If you have never received any type of federal or non-federal financial assistance, you must indicate this in the programmatic capability section of your proposal to receive a neutral score for this sub-criterion (5 points). Failure to respond to this criterion will result in a score of zero. If you have received non-federal funding, such as funding from a foundation, this can still improve your scoring on this criterion and the national review panel will take this into consideration. So, make sure to include information related to whether you have received a federal or non-federal sources of funding and indicate your experience in managing funds in general to improve your score on this criterion.

Q9. How can I demonstrate my program is not duplicative of other federally funded environmental job training programs?

Applicants must demonstrate that the proposed training project does not duplicate other Federally-funded programs for environmental job training in your target community. Some examples of types of duplicative training might include:

- National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) hazardous waste worker training programs (HWWTP) and Minority Worker Training Programs (MWTP). NIEHS maintains a list of their worker training grantees on their web site, <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/wetp>. If you are listed on this website as a recipient, you must demonstrate how services under this proposed project will complement, but not duplicate existing federal job training activities in your targeted service area (i.e., different target audience, type of training to be delivered, or certifications to be earned, etc). Applicants must undertake similar analyses for other federally funded environmental job training programs serving the area or community(ies) in their application.

The EPA will also conduct duplication screening internally with other EPA offices and federal partners.

Q10. What are examples of eligible uses of funds under this grant opportunity?

In addition to the required hazardous waste training (40-hr HAZWOPER) and any brownfield training, applicants may choose to deliver any of the environmental trainings listed under Section I.B of the RFP. In FY16, these include:

1. Solid Waste Management or Cleanup Training;
2. Superfund Site Cleanup (innovative and alternative treatment technologies) Training;
3. Wastewater Training;
4. Emergency Response Training;
5. Enhanced Environmental Health and Chemical Safety Training;
6. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Training; or
7. Advanced Energy Technologies

Q11. Are stipends or scholarships an eligible use of grant funds under this program?

Stipends for students, including on-the-job training costs or scholarship funds to support students' enrollment in college courses, are not eligible under this grant opportunity.

However, costs associated with eligible participant support costs, including costs associated with transporting trainees to site visits during training or for trainees to get to and from class are eligible.

Q12. How does an applicant ensure that all uses of EPA funds are eligible?

An applicant can ensure that all uses of EPA funds are eligible by ensuring the training they are offering, fall within the topics covered above in Q10. Examples of these include, but are not limited to:

- Training in first-aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and blood-borne pathogens.
- Training in chemistry, toxicology, and geology to the extent necessary to inventory, assess, remediate, and clean up contaminated sites.
- Training in HAZMAT, commercial driver's license (CDL), forklift, and machine operations associated with the transportation of hazardous waste.
- Training in climate adaptation or climate resiliency, including wildlife hazing.
- Training in the various certifications of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED).
- Training in vapor intrusion testing and mitigation.

Please note that due to the administrative cost prohibition, indirect costs are not eligible. Section I.C of the RFP provides a more extensive list of eligible costs, in addition to, a list of examples of ineligible costs. Appendix I "Prohibitions on Use of Funds" of the RFP further elaborates on ineligible costs.

Please contact the appropriate Regional Job Training Coordinator in Section VII of the Guidelines for specific questions on eligible uses of funds.

Q13. If my organization is successful in obtaining EPA funding, can we charge the costs we incurred for a consultant to prepare our grant proposal?

No. Costs for preparing your proposal are not an allowable cost.

Q14. Will EPA fund pre-award costs?

Yes, to the extent the costs are eligible, allowable, allocable, and reasonable.

Successful applicants may incur pre-award costs up to 90 days before grant award without prior EPA approval provided:

1. The applicant includes the pre-award costs in its proposal and the workplan negotiated with EPA;
2. EPA agrees that the costs are eligible and allowable when the Agency approves the scope of work for the grant; and
3. Any procurement contracts that are funded with pre-award costs comply with the competitive Procurement Standards.

Please note an applicant must obtain prior EPA approval to incur pre-award costs more than 90 days before award. **Note: applicants incur pre-award costs at their own risk and EPA is under no obligation to reimburse applicants for pre-award costs if the applicant does not receive an award or if the amount of the award is less than the applicant anticipates.**

III. Applicant Eligibility

Q15. Who is eligible to apply for an Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grant?

Applicants must be either eligible **governmental entities** as defined in CERCLA Section 104(k)(1) or eligible **nonprofit organizations** as defined in Public Law 106-107, the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act.

Eligible governmental entities include 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; a state; an Indian Tribe (other than in 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 U.S.C. 1601 and following); and the Metlakatla Indian Community. EPA welcomes and encourages proposals from coalitions of such entities, but a single eligible entity must be identified as the legal recipient. Intertribal

consortia, except consortia comprised of ineligible Alaskan tribes, are eligible to apply as well.

Eligible nonprofit organizations include any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization that is operated mainly for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purpose in the public interest; is not organized primarily for profit; and uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operation of the organization. Workforce Investment Boards that meet these criteria may be eligible nonprofit organizations. 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. Nonprofit applicants must provide proof of their nonprofit status at the time the proposal is submitted.

For-profit or proprietary training organizations or trade schools are not eligible to apply. See Section III.A of the Guidelines for additional information.

Q16. Can an applicant submit more than one proposal and serve different communities through each proposal?

No. Applicants cannot submit multiple proposals, even if the applicant proposes to serve a different target area.

Q17. Can a nonprofit organization or eligible governmental applicant submit a joint proposal in partnership with a for-profit organization?

No. EPA awards Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training grant funds to a single eligible applicant. Successful applicants may contract for necessary goods and services with for-profit organizations under competitive procurement procedures as required by EPA grant regulations, as applicable.

Q18. We live in a community with a large number of dislocated workers and would like to focus our recruitment and training efforts on this population. Is this eligible?

Yes, applicants may use a portion of their grant funding to target unemployed, dislocated workers. However, the grant funding is intended to target residents of solid or hazardous waste impacted communities who have been historically affected by pollution, disinvestment, and waste sites in their community. Thus, applicants should focus on recruiting from these types of affected community residents. Additionally, while a portion of the grant funds may be used to train dislocated workers or provide refresher training, in HAZWOPER for example, the core training program should focus on those who have little or no advanced education, work experience, or who have significant barriers to employment, and are unemployed or severely under-employed. Traditionally, grant funds have focused on training unemployed individuals who are low-income, minority, or tribal residents. Applicants who are providing dislocated workers refresher

training or single environmental certifications must ensure these workers have adequate environmental health and safety training since they will not receive the full training.

IV. Training Program Structure

Q19. What training is required?

The only required training in the FY16 Guidelines is OSHA 29 CFR 1910.120 40-hour Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER). In addition to brownfields hazardous waste training, applicants may choose to deliver a variety of environmental training listed Section I.B of the Guidelines. Training may include none of the items listed, or multiple items. Applicants must indicate the type of training and at what level the training will be delivered in their transmittal letter. See Section I.B. of the Guidelines for additional information.

Q20. What is the average number of people trained during a training cycle?

In past EWDJT reporting, an average of 20-24 individuals are trained during each cycle. This is usually due to the maximum number of trainees that can be accommodated in a classroom setting. This number also fluctuates depending on if the training program is located in an urban versus rural geographic setting where there may be a large number of persons seeking training or not. While EPA does not set requirements on the number of individuals entering and completing training, EPA encourages applicants to train as many people as possible. Different grantees will also have varying levels of enrollment based on the intensity and comprehensiveness of the curriculum, the number of certifications to be earned, and the varying costs of delivering training.

Q21. What is the average number of training cycles delivered under a grant?

In past EWDJT reporting, 2-3 training cycles per year appears to be the average number of training cycles offered. This number can fluctuate depending on the curriculum being offered as it correlates to available employment. While EPA does not set requirements on the number of training cycles that must be offered, EPA encourages applicants to offer training as often as possible. Different applicants will also have a varying number of cycles based on the schedule which the cycles are offered (days, nights/weekends, etc.)

Note: EPA strongly encourages applicants to focus the third, and final, year of their project period on placement, tracking of graduates, and reporting these results to EPA. Thus, it is assumed the last cycle of training will be concluded by the end of year two.

Q22. Does EPA require grantees/applicants to have a set training curriculum?

No. However, EPA does require training in OSHA 29 CFR 1910.120 40-hour Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) as outlined in Section III.C of the Threshold Criteria.

Note: EPA encourages grantees to have multi-faceted curricula and offer diversified training in order to assist graduates with obtaining sustainable, full-time employment in various environmental and cleanup activities. This is important given the nature of contractual short-term remediation work, seasonal hiring in the environmental and remediation fields, and for individuals who may be entering the workforce for the first time.

Q23. What are some things to consider when designing a curriculum?

The goal of the Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training grant is to help its participants develop the skills and certifications needed to secure full-time careers in the environmental and remediation fields. Your proposed training curriculum must link to the local labor needs of your target community in order to secure employment for program participants. Before deciding what types of training to offer, it may be useful to use results of employer discussions conducted in your community and/or labor market assessments to help you forecast employment opportunities for which training is needed. It may be useful to obtain commitments from employers in your community, who are looking for individuals with the certifications and skills you plan to deliver in your training, and who will hire graduates from your program.

Q24. Where can I find information about certified instructors who can deliver the needed training we are proposing?

While EPA does not endorse specific instructors, several EPA programs do provide databases of certified instructors who can deliver different types training:

1. EPA's Lead Program provides a database of certified instructors who can deliver the new lead renovation, repair, and painting (RRP) training. This list can be found at: www.epa.gov/lead/renovation-repair-and-painting-program
2. For wastewater training, EPA encourages you to contact your state wastewater operator certification coordinator who may be able to assist you in locating instructors that are familiar with your state's operator certification requirements. State operator certification program contact information can be found at the Association of Boards of Certification's website: www.abccert.org/certification_contacts/default.asp

Q25. What constitutes Superfund site cleanup training (i.e. innovative and alternative treatment technology training)?

Innovative and alternative technologies training could include training such as:

- An array of biological/bioremediation techniques (including phytoremediation);
- Advanced excavation practices;
- Treatment of groundwater and surface water;
- In-situ (in place) treatment of contaminants in soil and ground water using physical, chemical and thermal techniques;
- Rapid sampling and analytical approaches;

- Advanced data management and visualization practices;
- Dynamic or adaptive work strategies; or
- Green/sustainable remediation techniques, including use of renewable energy sources to power remediation systems.

Q26. What constitutes wastewater related training?

Wastewater treatment related training could include topics such as:

- Wastewater treatment system operation
- Onsite/decentralized system installation or maintenance
- Stormwater management
- Green infrastructure installation and maintenance
- Wastewater careers awareness training

The level of training related to wastewater treatment provided in any given curriculum will depend on the jobs available in that specific community. Awareness training should include information that helps participants understand the wastewater basics and the types of wastewater careers and employment that may be available in their communities. Participants should also learn about the skills, education, or certifications necessary for different wastewater jobs.

The ‘Recruitment and Retention’ section of the Work for Water website includes a presentation on water careers which can be used as a resource for developing an awareness curriculum.

http://www.workforwater.com/resourceforwaterprofessionals/page_int.aspx?id=52. On this webpage, and the several links associated with it, there is also information on other water career websites, water career job descriptions, and a “competency model” that describes the foundational skills necessary for careers in the water/wastewater field.

If grant applicants are interested in stormwater or green infrastructure related training, EPA has compiled a catalog of training opportunities for wet weather technologies, which can be found at

<http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/greeninfrastructure/upload/greenjobscatalog2010.pdf>.

There is no federally mandated operator training for wastewater professionals. Each state defines and develops unique operator licensing programs. Applicants should check with their state operator certification program to ascertain their specific certification requirements. Many states require that their wastewater service providers have documentation of a minimum level of education and experience, and require that applicants take and pass an exam.

Q27. What constitutes enhanced environmental health and chemical safety related training?

Training may include worker health and safety, promoting chemical (substance, mixture or article) awareness, including an overview of the content of material safety datasheets

(MSDS), information on exposure guideline limits (Occupational Exposure Limits and Recommended Exposure Limits), information contained within the NIOSH pocket guide to chemical hazards, and the OSHA/EPA Occupational Chemical Database.

Training that promotes safe work practices to reduce exposures to chemicals, including promotion of safer chemical products, engineering controls such as well-designed ventilation to promote air exchange, use of correct personal protective equipment including respiratory protection, gloves, goggles, or coveralls, isolation of work areas, safe storage and handling of chemicals, promoting sanitation and hygiene, and prevention of spills and proper waste disposal. These general worker protection methods have been well-established and are important to consider in any work environment (homes, schools, commercial buildings, clean-up sites, or traditional industrial facilities where chemical exposures are possible).

Training in an overview of any existing chemical specific worker training and certification program may include, but is not limited to: lead abatement, lead renovation, repair, and painting (RRP), asbestos abatement, PCBs, diisocyanates (auto-refinishing and spray polyurethane foam), pesticide worker protection standards, PFCs, PBDEs/HBCD, and others.

Q28. How much of the grant should go towards funding the direct training versus non-training programmatic expenses?

There is currently no requirement for how much of the grant should be committed directly towards training versus non-training programmatic expenses. Although grant funds can be used for a variety of eligible activities (e.g. costs for screening and placement, outreach, and curriculum development, among others activities), preference may be given to programs that commit the bulk of grant funds towards personnel costs to instructors and other direct costs of training.

The exact budget allocation for each program is expected to vary to some degree depending on a variety of factors. For example, some programs may be able to commit more funds directly towards training while others may require supporting costs for travel or curriculum development. In the latter case, it is important to thoroughly explain the additional costs and fully justify the budget allocation in your proposal. Applicants are still encouraged to seek non-EPA supplemental funding and leveraging for supporting non-environmental training costs whenever possible.

Q29. Can a grant recipient conduct a training cycle in another language, e.g. Spanish?

Yes. If the applicant chooses to serve a predominantly non-native English speaking population (e.g. Spanish speaking residents), the applicant may choose to deliver training in that language. The applicant should be cautious and mindful that examinations for certifications may be in English, and that some certifications or licenses require that holder has a valid legal ID or green card. Thus, the applicant should verify state, local, and/or federal certification requirements beforehand.

Applicants should also provide details about how individuals receiving instruction in languages other than English will be able to secure employment—keeping in mind potential barriers that may arise. Applicants must also be reminded that any support letters submitted with their proposal must be submitted in English, such as from training providers or employers expressing an interest to hire graduates of the proposed program or who support the proposed project by other means.

Q30. Can a grantee provide training to individuals who are not currently legal residents or are in the process of obtaining legal citizenship?

The EWDJT grant program does not contain any citizenship requirements or prohibitions for individuals receiving training. While grantees are able to provide training regardless of the trainees' citizenship status, they should remain mindful of any other residency requirements that individuals will need to meet in order to receive licenses or certification, and ultimately be placed in fulltime employment. Some licenses may require the holder to have a valid legal ID or green card. Applicants should research the requirements for each training, license, and certification that will be included in their EWDJT curriculum prior to submitting their proposal.

Programs that train non-US citizens should ensure that they have the capacity to provide such training (e.g. multilingual resources if necessary) and that any lack of legal residency will not pose a substantial barrier for the graduate(s) seeking employment. If the grantee decides to provide training to non-US citizens, they must still ensure equal opportunity for US citizens and that individuals are not excluded from training solely as a result of their status as a legal resident.

Q31. Can my program offer integrated pest management (IPM) training?

Yes. In FY16, applicants can provide training in integrated pest management (IPM) for public housing and project-based rental assistance properties, including training in pesticide prevention and the safe application of pesticides.

V. Community and Employer Partnerships

Q32. Am I required to inform the target community of my intention to apply for an Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training grant before or during the preparation of my proposal?

Although it is not required, applicants may improve their score by holding a community meeting, notifying the community about the proposed program prior to submission of a proposal, working with, and soliciting feedback from diverse community constituents about the proposed environmental training program prior to submission of a proposal. Working with the community and conducting ongoing, meaningful community involvement will usually help applicants score higher when their proposals are evaluated because their programs will better reflect the needs of the community and will have

already started marketing their program within the community. Employers, workforce investment boards (WIBs), community colleges, and community-based organizations provide critical partnerships needed to deliver a successful training program – especially in light of the fact that grant funds may not be used to provide life skills training or social services which can be leveraged through these partnerships.

Q33. How can I get the target community involved in my proposed training?

To engage your target community in the proposed training program, try to participate in events or activities already scheduled in your target community (e.g. town hall meetings, neighborhood advisory council meetings, church functions, etc). Be prepared to make an announcement or distribute flyers with information about your proposed training program. Another good idea would be to have a draft of your proposal available at the city's webpage or public library and encourage the community to provide comments.

Q34. What type of roles might community-based organizations play in my proposed training?

Community-based organizations can help you provide the non-environmental training (not covered under this grant) that may be required to help participants retain employment. Community-based organizations can play a number of valuable supporting roles including (but not limited to):

- Educational: offering GED classes, life skills training, recruitment assistance in the target community; and
- In-kind contributions: staff time, supplies, transportation, daycare services, equipment required for training, or providing a facility to host events or training.

Q35. How do I get potential employers from my target community involved in my proposed training program?

An essential part of any successful job training program is the involvement and participation of potential employers. After potential employers become aware of your proposed training program, encourage them to help in the design and delivery of your training program by:

- Inviting them to be part of your steering committee,
- Helping with the design and development of the training curriculum,
- Agreeing to provide on-the-job training or internships to trainees,
- Providing resources to support training such as equipment, and
- Providing mentoring to trainees.

Applicants are encouraged to discuss their efforts to engage the employer community in their responses to the appropriate ranking criteria.

Q36. Where can I find information on other environmental job training programs and receive assistance in developing my own?

For more information on environmental job training programs, please visit the Hazardous Materials and Research Training Institute's (HMTRI) website at: hmtri.org. HMTRI, through a cooperative agreement with the US EPA, provides technical assistance to existing grantees and prospective environmental workforce development and job training applicants through their Professional Learning Community (PLC). For more information, please visit brownfields-toolbox.org. Please contact Glo Hanne at ghanne@eicc.edu to register.

Applicants may also find more information on environmental health and safety training at the National Institute of Environmental Health Science's (NIEHS) Worker Education and Training Program website at: <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/careers/hazmat>.

The Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) Communities grantees can also provide technical assistance to existing and prospective applicants interested in submitting a proposal for an environmental workforce development and job training grant. For a listing of these organizations and contact information, visit: www.epa.gov/brownfields/brownfields-technical-assistance