

On November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, EPA Office of Brownfields & Land Revitalization held a webinar to assist applicants with preparing Assessment and Cleanup grant proposals. All questions posed by participants were responded to by an EPA representative. The recorded webinar is available at <http://epawebconferencing.acms.com/p8nxrcb9mic/>. **If you have additional questions, please contact your Regional Brownfields Contact list in Section VII. of the Guidelines.**

### **GENERAL QUESTIONS**

<p>Q: When is the next Revolving Loan Fund grant competition?</p> <p>A: The next RLF competition is tentatively scheduled for late summer/early fall 2018.</p>
<p>Q: How many Cleanup and Assessment Grants can be submitted by one municipality?</p> <p>A: Three cleanup grants, a community-wide assessment grant and a site-specific grant OR three cleanup grants and an assessment coalition grant.</p>
<p>Q: Are you able to apply for a cleanup grant in subsequent years for the same site if you have already been awarded a cleanup grant?</p> <p>A: Not for the same site; unless the previous award was less than the statutory \$200,000 cap. If the award was less than \$200,000, then you can apply for the difference in amount for the same site.</p>
<p>Q: We understood the assessment grant was \$500,000 this year.</p> <p>A: No - it is up to \$600,000 for assessment coalition grants and up to \$300,000 for community-wide assessment grants seeking hazardous substances and petroleum funding. As stated in the Guidelines, EPA reserves the right to reduce the amount funded at time of award.</p>
<p>Q: For an assessment coalition grant, is there a required break down between hazardous and petroleum? For example could the coalition apply for \$400,000 hazardous and \$200,000 petroleum?</p> <p>A: There is no required breakdown – the breakdown is dependent on the applicant’s need for funding. The example given is an acceptable breakdown.</p>
<p>Q: If three or more counties came together and applied for an Assessment Coalition through their regional planning agency, that would qualify as an Assessment coalition, with the regional planning commission acting as the grant administrator, correct?</p> <p>A: Yes, that could be one scenario and is a common scenario. It could be two counties and the RPA since that would meet the three entity requirement for a coalition.</p>
<p>Q: Does the City have to pay back clean-up grant funds if the property is sold after the clean-up?</p>

A: No. The obligation is to retain the property ownership through the life of the grant period, but once that ends, you would be free to sell the site.

Q: We are a municipality and instead of a SAMs have a CAGE Code. Please confirm that will work in Grants.gov.

A: The DUNS number is used as a lookup in SAM.gov. You can go to SAM.gov and use the search function to confirm you have an active account (using your DUNS). You may also be able to search by CAGE, but I have normally used a DUNS number. You have to have both a cage code and SAM # for various grants. <https://uscontractorregistration.com/>

Q: Does the Authorized Organization Representative need to be the project director that's listed in the grant application?

A: Not necessarily. The Authorized Organization Representative for an organization may already be in SAM.gov and may not necessarily be the same as the named project director.

Q: Did you say the grants.gov will reject the application if it is submitted from someone other than the AOR?

A: Correct. The application must be sent from the AOR's account.

Q: Can we use a variation of Arial font such as Arial Narrow?

A: No please. Consider the reviewers that are reading a considerable amount of proposals.

Q: Does the 'no map' format guideline apply to attachments as well?

A: Yes, that is what it definitely applies to. If you want to use up your valuable 15 page narrative for a little map insert that is up to you. Do not attach maps but realize that if you are a cleanup proposal then you are attaching the Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) and ABCAs often have maps

Q: The Application Package has a place for attachment of the Narrative and the "Other Attachments". Where should the Cover Letter be included?

A: The Cover Letter should be the first page of your pdf application package.

Q: What if you don't have Appendix B, then would you label Appendix A as Threshold, then Appendix B as community organization letters?

A: Yes - that is fine.

Q: Do you have to spell out PCBs, PAHs, etc. or would readers know this?

A: We suggest that you spell it out, at least the first time you use it.

Q: Is there any benefit to being a first time applicant? Are the applications reviewed equally?

A: Yes, the applications are all reviewed equally. No additional points are awarded to previously funded applicants. However, for assessment applicants, EPA intends to use

approximately 50% of the total amount of assessment funding available for grants to “new applicants.” Please see Section V.C. in the Assessment Guidelines for additional information.

Q: I want to confirm that even in defining the target area and community, we may not utilize maps to support our written descriptions at all. This "no maps" rule was a bullet point in one of the slides.

A: That is correct – no maps. Please focus on providing a good description of your target area using only the written narrative.

Q: Where can we find the Regional Priorities Form? Is it something we fill out?

A: The Regional Priorities only pertain to applicants seeking assessment funds. The Regional Priorities are listed in Section I.F. of the Assessment Guidelines and the Regional Priorities form is listed in Appendix 3 of the Assessment Guidelines.

Q: Does it work against an applicant if there are two entities applying for the same geographic area: one is a coalition and the other a community-wide? One is a current grantee, the other a new applicant.

A: No – it will not count against the applicants.

Q: We heard that this year there is a Congressional priority for more impoverished communities. Is this true?

A: If the mandate is imposed on the Brownfields Program, then we will comply and award a percentage of grants to communities experiencing persistent poverty. At this time, EPA is asking applicants to affirm whether or not their community is experiencing persistent poverty in the Cover Letter.

### **THRESHOLD REQUIREMENTS**

Q: What other means are acceptable if an entity does not have newspaper for publishing community notice?

A: If you do not have a newspaper then you should use equivalent means that you customarily use to community information in the target community. You need to show that you provided an opportunity for open comment.

Q: Does the public meeting referenced in the public notice need to be held as a part of a City Council meeting or may it be scheduled independently?

A: It can be a standalone. Just make sure that the notification is put out before the Community Notification deadline.

Q: For assessment grants, are state-mandated fees for the applicant (who will be considered "remediating parties") eligible grant costs?

A: Yes, state fees are generally an eligible expense.

Q: Can you apply for a cleanup grant in the future if your site has already received an assessment grant? Even if there are different applicants within the same government entity?

A: To answer your first question, yes, that is very common for an assessment grantee to later apply for cleanup funding at one of their sites.

Q: Are used tire clean ups eligible?

A: Tires are considered to be solid waste unless they are burned, in which case they might be considered petroleum waste or hazardous waste.

Q: For assessment does the applicant have to own the site?

A: No, the applicant does not need to own the property.

Q: So, for each petroleum site, a state eligibility letter is required prior to doing work - correct?

A: Under the Community-Wide Assessment Grant, the state eligibility letter is needed before spending grant funds on assessing a petroleum site. The requirement changes from state to state, so you may want to ask your Regional Brownfields lead that is noted in the Section VII. of the Guidelines.

Q: Could the cost of having done a Phase II assessment on a site be applied to the 20% match? (done a few years ago)

A: No, only cleanup work can be done using cleanup funds. Past work cannot be covered by the grant either.

Q: Can a specific site be eligible if a City receives UST reimbursement funds and is on a priority list?

A: Generally if a site is already on a priority list, it would not be a "low-risk" site, but this is site-specific. You can contact your State or EPA Region for further clarification.

Q: Will similar state-determined eligibility letters be required later for mixed petroleum and hazardous assessment grants?

A: State-determined eligibility letters are only required for sites with petroleum-only contamination (either the entire site, or a portion of the site). If the contamination is co-mingled with hazardous substances and petroleum, you must determine which the predominant contaminant is and respond to the appropriate threshold questions.

## COMMUNITY NEED CRITERION

Q: Under Welfare Impacts, what do "lack of access to community services" refer? Sewer, water, Natural gas or hospitals and colleges?

A: This could include all of these and more.

Q: Do you have examples of/more details on health monitoring?

A: Here's some additional information about health monitoring activities:

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-09/documents/finalphandbifact.pdf>

Q: What other resources are available to support the Community Need criterion?

A: Other resources include:

[www.epa.gov/enviro](http://www.epa.gov/enviro) and [atsdr.cdc.gov/toxprofiles](http://atsdr.cdc.gov/toxprofiles)

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/rural-economy-population/rural-poverty-well-being/geography-of-poverty.aspx>

The ATSDR Brownfields /Land Reuse Action Model helps the diverse members of the development community – officials, developers, community supporters, and residents, find ways to make health part of the renewal process. Communities can use the action model to identify common goals to incorporate these goals in strategic planning.

ATSDR - <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/sites/brownfields/publications.html>

ATSDR Action Model - <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/sites/brownfields/model.html>

Q: Can EJ Screen and CalEnviroScreen be used?

A: Yes, you can provide information from those resources.

Q: Regarding the Demographic Table--should we use the 2014 American Community Survey data referenced in the Table?

A: It's helpful to use values from the data sources list in the table so that values are comparable, however it is up to each applicant to decide what data will tell the most compelling story for their community.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND FEASIBILITY FOR SUCCESS CRITERION

Q: Our counties' think zoning is a bad word so I can I deal with land use plans when there really aren't any? Just say so?

A: Yes, you can state that...but more importantly discuss what the future of your community will look like down the road. You don't have to use the bad word zoning :)

Q: How detailed should we be in redevelopment plans? For example, county wants to convert gas station into community kitchen and motel into senior housing.

A: The more details the better. We like to see end uses such as those you mention.

Q: If the cleanup is part of a Downtown Revitalization where would be the best place to describe those details so that the EPA can get the full picture of the importance of the clean up to the overall revitalization of the town?

A: The best place to describe those details is under *Project Description, Alignment with Revitalization Plans*.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS CRITERION**

Q: Are letters of support needed?

A: Yes - Letters of COMMITMENT are required from the community organization(s), but not the governmental organizations.

### **PROJECT BENEFITS CRITERION**

**No questions were submitted for this criterion.**

### **PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY & PAST PERFORMANCE CRITERION**

Q: Looking at the points, an applicant will automatically get less points if they've never had other agreements?

A: Applicants that cannot demonstrate their past performance because they have never been awarded an assistance agreement will receive a neutral score.

Q: Do we address audit findings only for grants or for government budgets also?

A: Our guidelines require grant related audit findings for both federal and non-federal assistance; it doesn't specific government budgets.