



RAKE IT IN, FL:

Tips for a Successful EPA
Brownfield Grant Application

November 3, 2023
FBA Lunch and Learn

NJIT

TAB

Technical Assistance to
Brownfield Communities

Today's Presenter:

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EPA Brownfields Definition

A **brownfield site is defined** in CERCLA § 101(39) as real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, controlled substances, petroleum or petroleum products, or is mine-scarred land.



Engage the community

Funding sources

Build Partnerships



- Assemble a task force
- Create a Brownfield Inventory and prioritize sites



- Phase I ESA
- Phase II ESA
- Remedial Investigation



Site reuse vision

Amounts are subject to change

FY24 Brownfields Multipurpose, Assessment, and Cleanup Grant Offerings

Grant Type	Maximum Project Period	Maximum Amount Per Grant	Estimated # of Awards	Total Per Grant Type	
				Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funds	Regular Appropriated Funds
Multipurpose	5 years	\$1,000,000	20		\$20,000,000
Assessment (State/Tribal Level)	5 years	\$2,000,000	25	\$50,000,000	
Assessment Coalitions	4 years	\$1,500,000	26		\$40,000,000
Assessment (CW) - New	4 years	\$500,000	30		\$15,000,000
Assessment (CW) - Existing	4 years	\$500,000	30		\$15,000,000
Cleanup	4 years	\$500,000	40	\$20,000,000	
Cleanup	4 years	\$2,000,000	17	\$35,000,000	
Cleanup	4 years	\$5,000,000	8	\$40,000,000	
			196	\$145,000,000	\$90,000,000
				\$235,000,000	

NO COST SHARE



EPA Brownfield Grants Solicitation Cycle

- Request for Applications (RFA) – Fall
- **Due Date: November 13th**
- Announcement of Successful Grant Applicants – Spring
- Funding become available to grantees – Late Summer



Approximately 1 Year





Brownfield Assessment Grants

Direct costs associated with:

- Inventory
- Site prioritization
- Community involvement
 - Community Liaison
 - Stipends
 - Childcare
- Site reuse planning
- Assessment
- Cleanup planning
- Programmatic management of the grant
- Health monitoring
- Environmental Insurance

- ❖ Up to \$500,000 in funding (\$2,000,000 for state and tribal)
- ❖ 4-year performance period





Brownfield Cleanup Grants

- ❖ Up to \$5,000,000 in funding
- ❖ 4-year performance period

Direct costs associated with:

- Cleanup
- Programmatic management of the grant
 - required performance reporting
 - cleanup oversight
 - environmental monitoring of cleanup work
- Health monitoring
- Environmental Insurance





Brownfields Multipurpose Grant

Direct costs associated with:

- Inventorying
- Site prioritization
- Community involvement
 - Community Liaison
 - Stipends
 - Childcare
- Assessment
- Cleanup planning
- Cleanup
- Plan for revitalization of target area
- Programmatic management of the grant
- Health monitoring
- Environmental Insurance

- ❖ Up to \$1,000,000 in funding
- ❖ 5-year performance period














Grant Writing Tips & Common Mistakes



Open Solicitations

FY 2024 Multipurpose, Assessment, and Cleanup Grant Application Resources - The application submission deadline is November 13, 2023.

Please find below information on the FY 2024 Brownfields Multipurpose, Assessment, and Cleanup Grant Guidelines and application resources.

- [FY 2024 Multipurpose Grant Guidelines](#) 
- [FY 2024 Community-wide Assessment Grant Guidelines](#) 
- [FY 2024 Assessment Coalition Grant Guidelines](#) 
- [FY 2024 Community-wide Assessments Grant for States and Tribes Guidelines](#) 
- [FY 2024 Cleanup Grant Guidelines](#) 
-  [FY 2024 Summary of Brownfields Grant Guideline Changes \(pdf\)](#), (260.92 KB)
-  [FY24 Eligibility Chart for Multiple Applications \(pdf\)](#), (122.37 KB)
-  [FY24 Eligibility Chart for Existing Grant Recipients \(pdf\)](#), (164.85 KB)
- [FY 2024 Frequently Asked Questions about Multipurpose, Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, and Cleanup Grants](#)
-  [FY 2024 Sample Federal Forms Required to Submit an Application \(pdf\)](#), (1.37 MB)
- **NEW:**  [FY 2024 Cleanup Grant Sample Site Characterization Letter Template \(docx\)](#), (38.4 KB)
-  [Tips for Submitting an Application through Grants.gov \(pdf\)](#), (146.85 KB)
- [EPA news release - September 26, 2023](#)

Pre-Recorded Videos on Minimum Grant Requirements



CONTENTS BY SECTION

SECTION I. – FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

- I.A. Description of Grant
- I.B. Uses of Grant Funds
- I.C. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage
- I.D. Measuring Environmental Results: A
- I.E. Supporting Environmental Justice
- I.F. Supporting Climate Adaptation and R
- I.G. Supporting High-Quality Jobs, Strong Pathways
- I.H. Additional Provisions for Applicants

SECTION II. – AWARD INFORMATION

- II.A. What is the Amount of Available Fun
- II.B. What is the Project Period for Award
- II.C. Substantial Involvement

SECTION III. – ELIGIBILITY INFORM

- III.A. Who Can Apply?
- III.B. Threshold Criteria for Multipurpose
 - 1. Applicant Eligibility
 - 2. Community Involvement
 - 3. Target Area
 - 4. Affirmation of Brownfield Site Ow
 - 5. Use of Grant Funds
 - 6. Expenditure of Existing Grant Func
 - 7. Contractors and Named Subrecipie

SECTION IV. – APPLICATION SUBMI

- IV.A. How to Obtain an Application Pack
- IV.B. Due Date and Submission Instructic
- IV.C. Content and Form of Application St
- IV.D. Narrative Information Sheet
- IV.E. Narrative/Ranking Criteria
 - 1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION
 - 2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COM
 - 3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ES
 - 4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY
- IV.F. Leveraging
- IV.G. Confidential Business Information

SECTION V. – NARRATIVE REVIEW INFORMATION

- V.A. Evaluation Criteria
- V.B. Other Factors and Considerations
- V.C. Review and Selection Process

SECTION VI. – AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

- VI.A. Award Notices
- VI.B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements
- VI.C. Reporting Requirements

SECTION IV. – APPLICATION SUBMISSION INFORMATION

- IV.A. How to Obtain an Application Package 22
- IV.B. Due Date and Submission Instructions 22
- IV.C. Content and Form of Application Submission 23
- IV.D. Narrative Information Sheet 24

- IV.E. Narrative/Ranking Criteria 26
 - 1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION 27
 - 2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT 29
 - 3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS 32
 - 4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE 36

- IV.F. Leveraging 39
- IV.G. Confidential Business Information 40

SECTION V. – NARRATIVE REVIEW INFORMATION

- V.A. Evaluation Criteria 40
- V.B. Other Factors and Considerations 48
- V.C. Review and Selection Process 49

GENERAL APPLICATION TIPS

#1 Piece of
Advice

- FOLLOW DIRECTIONS (read entire Guidelines).
- Decide what your story is. How is your community different from other applicants?
- Make sure project outcomes match community needs. Keep a consistent narrative throughout.

The Dragon & the City - Storytelling Technique

Talk (briefly) about what is good and valuable in your city

Focus on your city's dragon(s)

- Environmental injustice
- Disinvestment
- Climate change
- Other threats?
- How has it been allowed to get this bad?
- What is the cost to the city and its people?

Brownfields are the heroes! How can they be used to defend your city, attack the dragon(s), and what is the reward?

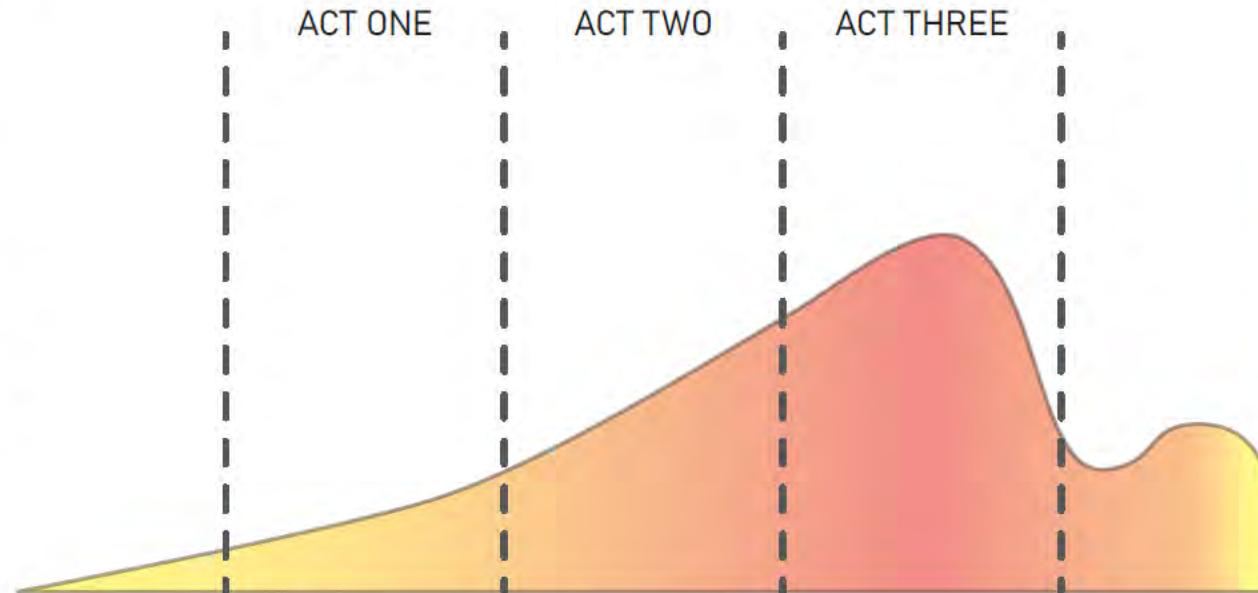


Storytelling: Brownfields Beyond the Three Act Narrative Structure

Before, After, and Beyond



Source: frankchetko.kwikifold.com



Modified from Pauline Clague, *Five Beats Of Indigenous Storytelling*.



Source: Google Maps, September 2019.

Once Upon a Time...
The Endicott-Johnson Corporation was a major cultural and economic force in the development of Johnson City. The company treated workers fairly and used their land to provide recreation space for the community.

Introduction:
The post-war industrial decline led to EJ factory closures throughout the city. These abandoned structures stood as a reminder of hard times for 40 years.

Rising Action:
The sister factories Century and Sunrise are sold to investors. The site is assessed and contamination is identified. The structure remains intact.

Crisis:
Site is cleaned up and existing structure is repurposed.
Falling Action:
Century Sunrise Redevelopment opens in 2018, providing affordable housing within the city.

Future of Setting:
The redevelopment attracts new residents and furthers development within the city. Many former industrial sites have since been remediated and given new life, providing needs such as affordable housing and public recreation space.

Always ask yourself,

· Who writes the stories?

· Who benefits from the stories?

· Who is missing from the stories?

III.B. Threshold Criteria

CONTENTS BY SECTION

SECTION I. – FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION.....	3
I.A. Description of Grant.....	4
I.B. Uses of Grant Funds.....	5
I.C. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage.....	7
I.D. Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outputs/Outcomes.....	7
I.E. Supporting Environmental Justice.....	8
I.F. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated Into the Solicitation.....	9
SECTION II. – AWARD INFORMATION.....	9
II.A. What is the Amount of Available Funding?.....	9
II.B. What is the Project Period for Awards Resulting from this Solicitation?.....	9
II.C. Substantial Involvement.....	9
SECTION III. – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION AND THRESHOLD CRITERIA.....	10
III.A. Who Can Apply?.....	10
III.B. Threshold Criteria for Assessment Grants.....	11
SECTION IV. – APPLICATION SUBMISSION INFORMATION.....	16
IV.A. How to Obtain an Application Package.....	16
IV.B. Due Date and Submission Instructions.....	16
IV.C. Content and Form of Application Submission.....	17
IV.D. Narrative Information Sheet.....	18
IV.E. Narrative/Ranking Criteria.....	21
1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION.....	21
2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.....	23
3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS.....	25
4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE.....	29
IV.F. Leveraging.....	31
IV.G. Confidential Business Information.....	32
SECTION V. – NARRATIVE REVIEW INFORMATION.....	33
V.A. Evaluation Criteria.....	33
V.B. Other Factors and Considerations.....	40
V.C. Review and Selection Process.....	40
SECTION VI. – AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION.....	41
VI.A. Award Notices.....	41
VI.B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.....	42
VI.C. Reporting Requirements.....	42
VI.D. Brownfield Programmatic Requirements.....	43
VI.E. Disputes.....	43
SECTION VII. – EPA REGIONAL BROWNFIELD PROGRAM CONTACTS.....	44
Appendix 1 Grants.gov Application Submission Instructions.....	45
A. Requirements to Submit Through Grants.gov and Limited Exception Procedures.....	45
B. Submission Instructions.....	45
C. Technical Issues with Submission.....	47
D. Application Materials.....	48

- Pass/fail
- 1. Applicant Eligibility
- 2. Community Involvement
- 3. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds
- 4. Contractors and Named Subrecipients
- Answer all the questions! If it doesn't apply, say so, don't leave blanks or skip sections

IV.E. Narrative/Ranking Criteria

CONTENTS BY SECTION

SECTION I. – FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION.....	3
I.A. Description of Grant	4
I.B. Uses of Grant Funds.....	5
I.C. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage.....	7
I.D. Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outputs/Outcomes	7
I.E. Supporting Environmental Justice	8
I.F. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated Into the Solicitation.....	9
SECTION II. – AWARD INFORMATION.....	9
II.A. What is the Amount of Available Funding?.....	9
II.B. What is the Project Period for Awards Resulting from this Solicitation?.....	9
II.C. Substantial Involvement	9
SECTION III. – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION AND THRESHOLD CRITERIA	10
III.A. Who Can Apply?.....	10
III.B. Threshold Criteria for Assessment Grants	11
SECTION IV. – APPLICATION SUBMISSION INFORMATION	16
IV.A. How to Obtain an Application Package.....	16
IV.B. Due Date and Submission Instructions	16
IV.C. Content and Form of Application Submission.....	17
IV.D. Narrative Information Sheet	18
IV.E. Narrative/Ranking Criteria.....	21
1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION	21
2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	23
3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS.....	25
4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE	29
IV.F. Leveraging.....	31
IV.G. Confidential Business Information	32
SECTION V. – NARRATIVE REVIEW INFORMATION	33
V.A. Evaluation Criteria	33
V.B. Other Factors and Considerations	40
V.C. Review and Selection Process.....	40
SECTION VI. – AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION.....	41
VI.A. Award Notices	41
VI.B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.....	42
VI.C. Reporting Requirements	42
VI.D. Brownfield Programmatic Requirements	43
VI.E. Disputes	43
SECTION VII. – EPA REGIONAL BROWNFIELD PROGRAM CONTACTS	44
Appendix I Grants.gov Application Submission Instructions.....	45
A. Requirements to Submit Through Grants.gov and Limited Exception Procedures.....	45
B. Submission Instructions.....	45
C. Technical Issues with Submission.....	47
D. Application Materials.....	48

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION
2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS
4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

- Geographic Boundary(ies)
 - Ex: Municipality, County
 - Make as big as reasonable
- Target Area(s)
 - Specific area within your geographic boundary
 - Ex: neighborhood, downtown district, census tract
 - Be specific! Include street names, natural boundaries, coordinates
- Priority Site(s)
 - Why? What's around them? What's the impact?



This section “sets the stage” for talking about the brownfield challenges within the community and how this grant will address those challenges.

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

Tips and Common Mistakes

- Competitive applications will have a project and outcomes that align with existing community revitalization efforts.
- Demonstrate that you have plans to get from A to Z to assure success.
- Address the potential for displacement – if not applicable, say why and how



1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

Tips and Common Mistakes (cont.)

- Talk about community investment (i.e., streetscape improvements, utility upgrades, BID, etc.).
- List existing infrastructure to be leveraged (i.e., water, sewer, gas, electric, transportation, high speed internet) as well as any upgrades that will be required to meet project goals.
- Be clear on leveraged resources (committed versus anticipated).

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

Don't say:

"The target area is an environmental justice neighborhood. There are many vacant properties that impact the people that live there. This grant will be used to address the brownfields, which will result in a better quality of life for the neighborhood."

How do you know?

What's the impact?

How?

Successful Example:

"...Early Long Island waterfront and industrial development filled the area with marinas, warehouses, railroad tracks, switching yards, fuel oil terminals, airplane hangars, metal fabricating plants, and defense industry factories from preWorld War II. After World War II, when Black and LatinX veterans were denied homeownership in other neighborhoods, New Cassel thrived as a minority, middle-class locale. Open farmland was filled with residential and commercial development, and land south of the LIRR was developed with light industrial businesses. Later, economic recessions fueled residential overcrowding, increased gang activity, and drug trafficking in New Cassel. Vacant lots became abundant as building stock aged without investment.

While coordinated renewal efforts have marked the past decade, many economic, social, and environmental challenges persist in New Cassel today. Pervasive vacant/underutilized and contaminated properties create barriers to enhancing neighborhood aesthetics, improving safety and walkability, and increasing access to green space and recreation. According to the American Community Survey, the poverty rate for residents of the New Cassel hamlet (11.8%) doubles the poverty rate for North Hempstead (4.9%) and Nassau County (5.9%) in a region where the housing cost burden is high."

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Use data sources to establish
 - Community's need for funding – financial and socioeconomic information and burdens
 - Threats to sensitive populations – social, environmental, health, and economic data/indicators
 - Data should be for geographic and target areas



Stage has been set. This section should show the reviewer who is on it (community) and what their story is, tying everything together into a cohesive description of your plan

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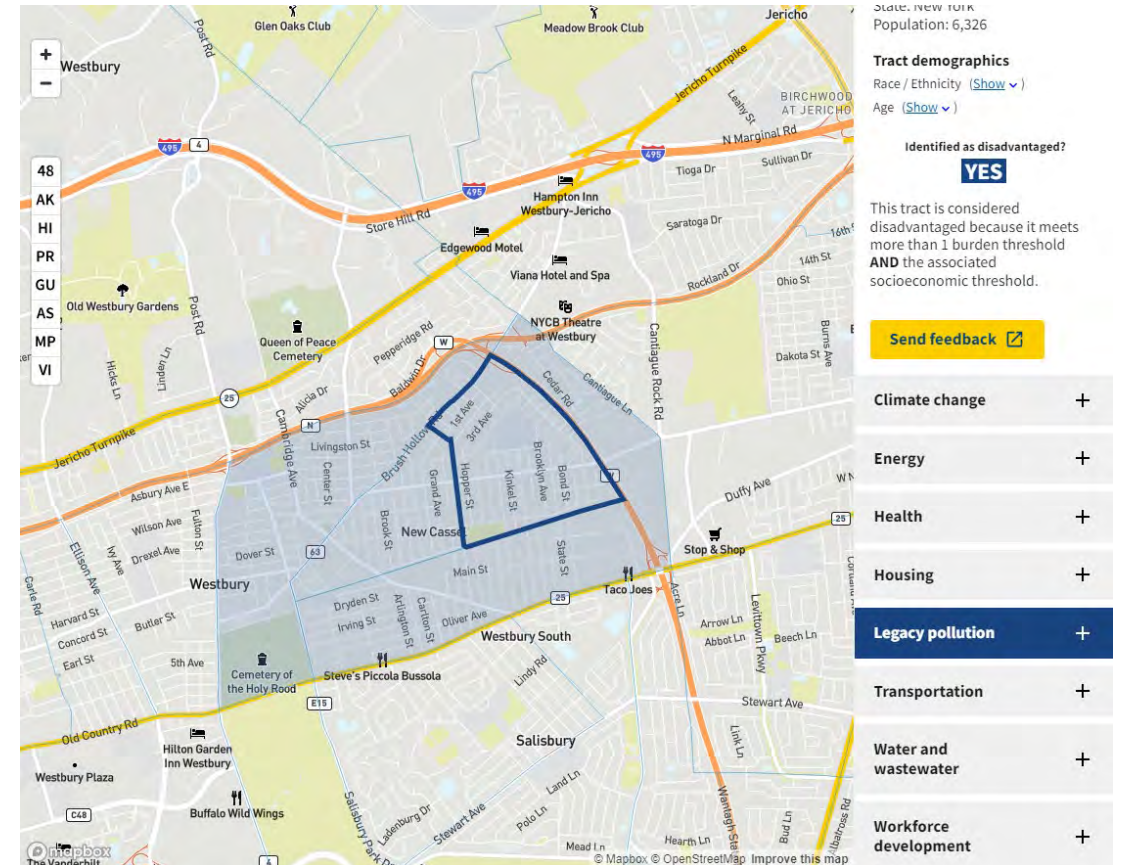


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2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Tips and Common Mistakes

- Quantify impacts to community when possible.
- Emphasize how disadvantaged, disinvested, depleted, dire the area is...show that you *really* need this money!!
- Include data from EPA's EJSCREEN Tool and EnviroAtlas; and CEQ's CEJST to establish community characteristics and need.
- If health statistics aren't available at a local level, say so
- Describe your community engagement plan, even if it's ongoing.



2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Tips and Common Mistakes (cont.)

- Connect the dots—look at the sensitive populations you mentioned—is your engagement inclusive of them?
- Make sure you discuss how the input from the community engagement plan will be meaningfully incorporated into the project.
- Describe how this grant will address or facilitate the identification and reduction of threats to the health or welfare of your vulnerable populations.
- Select meaningful partners with meaningful roles.



2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Don't say:

“According to the SECT tool, the community. The sensitive population are impacted by the fields in the neighborhood. This grant will be used to clean up the site to create a clinic for veterans. The neighborhood is also impacted by the fields.”

Show data

Compared to what?

How?

Why?

So...?

Successful Example:

The majority-minority New Cassel BOA **suffers disproportionately from environmental** and public health risks. Polluting industries in North Hempstead have predominantly located in New Cassel, including 88 regulated facilities. Many of these facilities are listed on the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (NYS DEC) Inactive Hazardous Waste Disposal Site Registry with documented soil and groundwater contamination (primarily from chlorinated solvents and/or petroleum). ... The EPA's EJSCREEN tool (measuring environmental justice burdens, updated 2019) **ranks New Cassel residents in 98th percentile for superfund proximity in the country**, 78th for fine particulates (PM 2.5), 81st percentile for ozone, 90th percentile for lead paint indicators, and 91st percentile for traffic proximity and volume. New Cassel also faces tremendous challenges due to extreme weather impacts. **Extreme weather events have disproportionate impacts on low-income, minority neighborhoods** like New Cassel, which are more vulnerable **due to poor housing quality, deficient infrastructure, and lack of transportation access.**

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS



Tips and Common Mistakes

- Show a generalized timeline of how the work will be done in grant performance period.
- Show how the applicant will easily identify when the project is or is not on schedule and describe corrective action.
- Need to substantiate costs (don't back into them). Include unit costs, be specific e.g. \$ in travel, supplies; who? what? purpose?
- **Check your math!**
- Make sure your budget correlates to your tasks.
- Understand outputs versus outcomes.
- Quantify outputs

Output = deliverables, i.e. # of Phase Is, an inventory, a report, etc.

Outcome = result of the project or activities, i.e. # of jobs created, acres of greenspace, etc.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

Tips and Common Mistakes

- Clearly describe the project management structure and how it will function.
- Make sure you read the “and/or” in the evaluation criteria.
- Use tables to summarize where appropriate to save space and make it easy to read for the reviewer
- DON'T BE MODEST...but don't give more than 3 examples.
- Address all the criteria. If you have no history, then say that for neutral score of 8 points. Not responding will get you 0.



4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE



“The City presently has or had EPA brownfields grants as well as an EDA grant. FY18 Assessment Grant (rec’d extension); generic QAPP, 14 Phase I’s, 7 Phase II’s, 1 cleanup plans; 9 quarterly reports, ACRES reporting; financial reports; 14 sites and 47 acres ready for use. The EDC estimates that the planned redevelopment will result in hundreds of new residential units (some affordable), over 400 FTE jobs and millions of funds leveraged.”

Since 1988, the City has secured and effectively utilized multiple Federal and EPA Brownfields Grants. The status of the City’s most recent EPA grants is:

1. FY14 Community-Wide Assessment | CA #BF-00F90901 | \$400K | 10/1/14-17 (closed);*
2. FY16 RLF | CA # BF01F21301 | \$820,000 | Open*
3. CDBG | Low/Mod Income Housing Rehab | \$700K*

***Outputs:** one Quality Management Plan, nine Quality Assurance Project Plans, 22 Phase 1 ESAs, 8 Phase 2 ESAs; 12 Quarterly Reports; 3 DBEs and 3 FFRs;

***Outcomes:** 8 sites and 38.45 acres were designated as ready for use; redevelopment resulted in 813 jobs and leveraged \$100M; 122 safe and affordable senior housing units constructed

GENERAL APPLICATION TIPS

- Write as though the reader knows NOTHING about your community.
- Look at past successful applications.
- Be kind to your reviewers – minimize use of acronyms/technical/organizational jargon. Make it easy and compelling to read!

GENERAL APPLICATION TIPS (cont.)

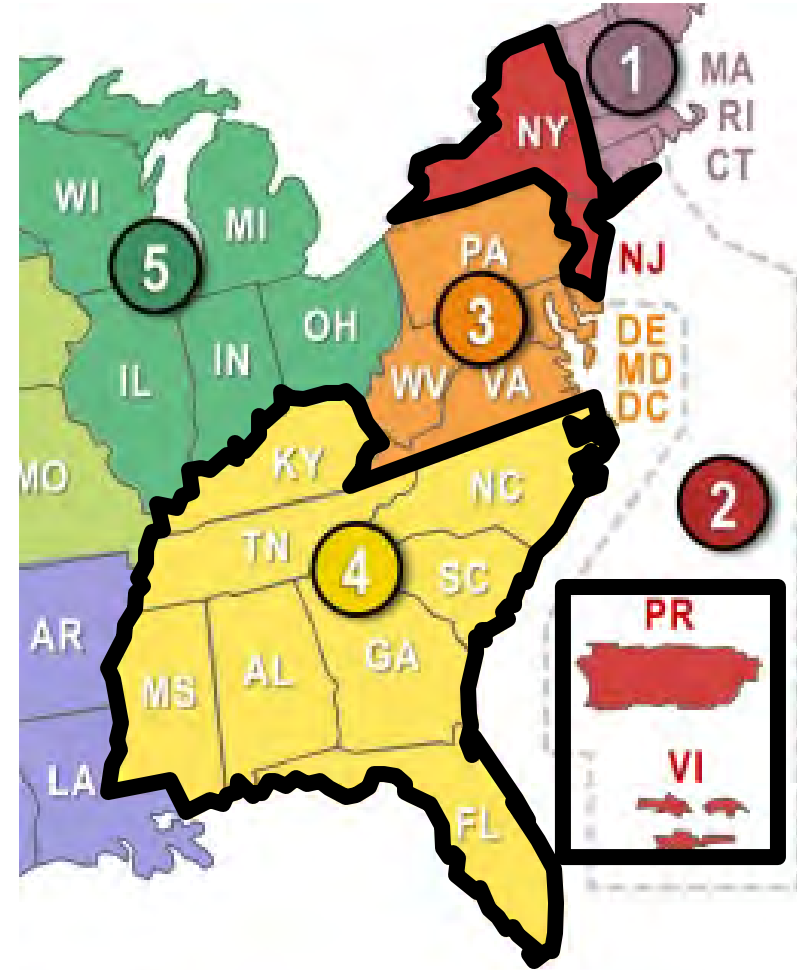
- Don't rely on past successes – keep the application forward-focused.
- Read and evaluate any proposal written by a consultant.
- Do not use hyperlinks other than sourcing data. No graphics or pictures either.
- Use the outline and template tables provided in the guidelines.
- Make sure sub-contractors have been procured according to EPA requirements.

What is TAB?

(Technical Assistance to Brownfields Communities)

TAB is a technical assistance program, funded by the USEPA, which is intended to serve as an independent resource to communities and nonprofits attempting to cleanup and reclaim brownfields.

➤ **Assistance is *free* of charge!**



HELP!!!

Adhering to
EPA grant
requirements

Understanding
the technical
issues

Engaging the
right contractors

Understanding
laws and
regulations

Understanding
liability issues

Marketing
the
brownfield
site

Navigating
the
regulatory
process

Engaging
the
community

Identifying
funding

**Securing
funding**



NJIT Brownfields Leadership Team

We are planners, engineers, environmental scientists, and social scientists who have helped hundreds of communities.



NJIT TAB ASSISTANCE

Assistance is provided through...

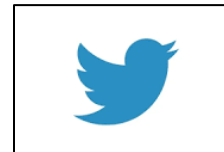
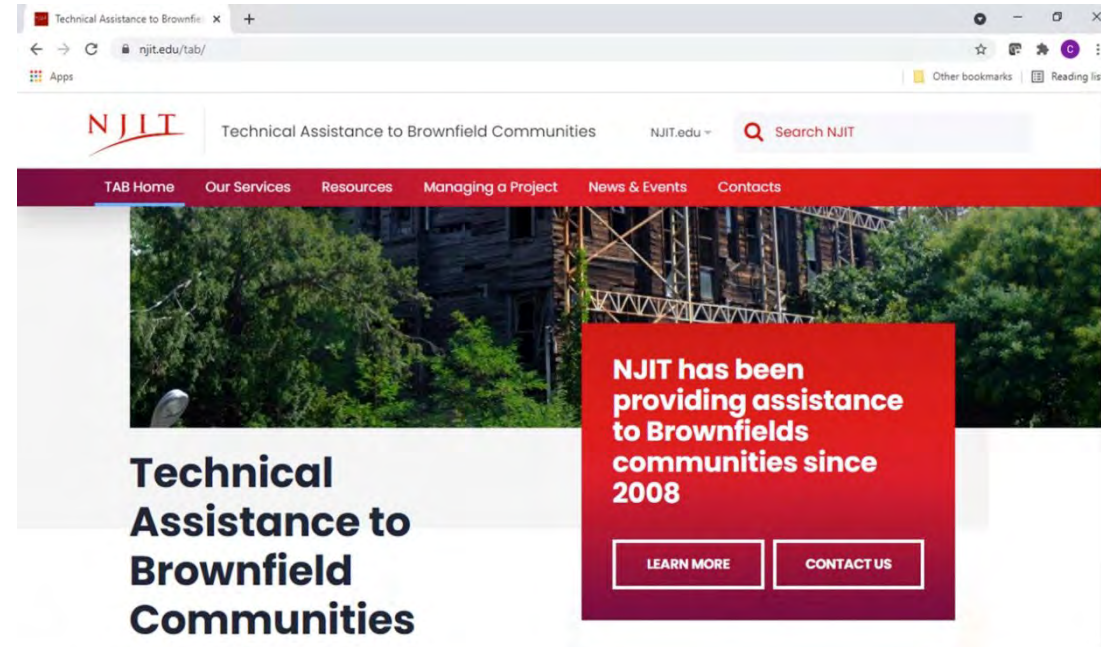
- ❖ Resource Center
- ❖ Brownfield Educational Forums
- ❖ One-on-one Technical Assistance



NJIT TAB Resource Center

www.njit.edu/tab

- ❖ info on all aspects of assessing and cleaning up a brownfield site
- ❖ news and upcoming events
- ❖ Federal and state funding sources
- ❖ EPA and state contacts
- ❖ previously recorded webinars
- ❖ downloads of workshop and seminar presentations
- ❖ success stories
- ❖ how-to videos
- ❖ successful grant applications
- ❖ Infill development, resilience, OZs, etc.



@NjitTab



NJIT TAB Hotline
973-642-4165

Email: tab@njit.edu

NJIT TAB Brownfield Educational Forums

Conferences: pre-conference workshops, learning labs, panel sessions, office hours

Workshops: 2 to 4 hour interactive sessions on brownfield related topics

Brownfield Boot Camps: 4 to 7 hour more intensive, deep dive into specific brownfield related topics

Webinars: various brownfield related topics

All-Grantee Meetings: work with state agencies and EPA

COVID-appropriate virtual events



NJIT TAB One-on-One Technical Assistance

Tailored to your specific needs...

Identify funding sources

Guidance on developing brownfield inventories

Review draft grant applications

Create project prioritization processes

Develop redevelopment strategy

Participate in the consultant solicitation process

Develop strategies on marketing brownfields sites

Explain the regulatory programs

Develop Assets and Needs Studies

Explain clean-up technologies

Design and conduct community workshops



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

EPA guidelines, FAQs, pre-recorded webinars:

<https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/marc-grant-application-resources>

Examples of successful grants:

<https://www.njit.edu/tab/sample-grant-applications>

Resources for Criterion 2 – Community Need:

EJ Screen: <https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen>

CEJST: <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#3/33.47/-97.5>

EnviroAtlas:

<https://enviroatlas.epa.gov/enviroatlas/interactivemap/>

Census: <https://data.census.gov/>

PLACES: <https://www.cdc.gov/places/index.html>

FL Brownfields:

<https://ca.dep.state.fl.us/mapdirect/?focus=brnfls>