

January 21, 2015

HMTRI Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)—Cycle 12, Session 4

Topics: Current happenings / Updates from Washington as of January 21, 2015

Last minute issues when developing an EWDJT program plan—Proposal “tune-ups”

Student recruitment, retention, and placement

Resources

—EWDJT Regional Coordinators

—HMTRI Brownfields Toolbox website (www.brownfields-toolbox.org)

Networking opportunities

—Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting—August 19–20, 2015

—2015 National Brownfields Training Conference—September 2–4, 2015

—National Environmental Justice Conference—March 11–13, 2015

—Good Jobs, Green Jobs 2015—April 13, 2015

Funding and coordination opportunities

Current happenings / Updates from Washington as of January 21, 2015

The FY2015 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Program (EWDJT) due date for proposals is February 3, 2015. FINAL REMINDER: All applicants will be required to submit through www.grants.gov. Organizations not familiar with using www.grants.gov need to research the site as soon as possible as it takes some time and effort for first time users to sign up. Plan to submit early (in case there is a glitch). If Internet submission is not possible, contact your EPA Regional Coordinator as soon as possible. Contact information is provided below.

Schedule for processing EWDJT awards

- Proposals due—February 3
- Rejections for not meeting qualification criteria—end of February
- Award announcements—April/May
- Grant forms, work plans, etc.—June/July
- Email that funds are available—August/September
- Annual All-Grantee Meeting—August
- Funds may be spent up to 90 days before final paperwork after official acceptance

Last minute issues when developing an EWDJT program plan—Proposal “tune-ups”

Budget issues

Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting

Now that the location of the 2015 All-Grantee Meeting has been set, better estimates can be made regarding travel budgets. There are two meetings to consider. The 2015 All-Grantee Meeting is mandatory for all EWDJT grantees. Active PLC members are also invited to attend. The 2015 *Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting* will be held Wednesday and Thursday, August 19–20, 2015, in Alexandria, VA, with travel days of August 18 and August 21. Participants must assume costs of transportation and meals. Hotel accommodations for three nights will be provided along with one working lunch, and morning and afternoon breaks.

National Brownfields 2015 Training Conference

For those interested in this important conference, the National Brownfields 2015 Training Conference will be held in Chicago, IL, on September 2–4, 2015. Reduced registration is available until February 1. Participants must assume all travel, hotel, meals, and registration costs.

Review the activities proposed in the program plan, identifying allowable and disallowed costs. EPA is clear regarding activities they are able to support. A basic rule of thumb is activities that are directly involved with recruitment, training, and placement are allowable costs. Life skills and non-environmental related training must be provided with leveraged support.

Double check to insure that the proposed budget is consistent with deliverables presented in the proposed program. Ensure that all of the proposed activities and deliverables are funded either by EPA funds or leveraged sources. The EWDJT program relies heavily on partner direct and in-kind support. It is important to identify that support and how it relates the promised activities and deliverables in the proposed program plan.

Partnership issues

Partnerships are critical to sustainable programs. With limited EWDJT support, it is critical that programs partner with organizations that can fill gaps not funded by EPA. Without partnership participation, EWDJT programs are not sustainable. This reality should be reflected in the program plan with strong partner participation identified.

Not all identified partners will provide support that can be quantified but are important to the success of the program. Community participation, support, and guidance are critical and greatly influence recruitment and retention of successful participants. For this reason, community participation should not be underestimated or diminished in the program plan.

Student recruitment, retention, and placement

Partnerships extend from community support to training, retention and placement. It is important to identify how partners will contribute to the principal activities just described. Partners for the purpose of “namesake” do not make for sustainable EWDJT programs. Likewise, contributing partners need to be recognized and identified.

Remember—The EWDJT program is all about providing jobs to local residents for environmental employment. Everything in the EWDJT proposed plan should be targeted at environmental employment. This means relationships with local employers and the skills that are in demand drive the entire EWDJT program plan. “Train and they will be hired” does not work unless training is “demand-driven” by local employers. Curriculum must be consistent with the needs of employers. Employer input also relates to recruitment, participant attitudes, expectations, and personalities. Excluding employers from an advisory role is a critical mistake in any EWDJT plan.

Final issue—If it’s not in the proposal it does not exist. Every EWDJT program expects to meet and hopefully exceed proposed expectations. It should also be noted that if activities and goals are not written in the program proposal, evaluators cannot expect that they will occur. Do not assume that good intentions or implied goals will result in a positive evaluation. Include every goal, outcome, and expectation in the proposed plan. Do not over-promise, but clearly present all that can be expected from the program.

If it is not in the proposal, do not assume that it exists.

Resources

EPA Regional Job Training Coordinators

Inform your EPA Regional Job Training coordinator of your intentions to respond to the 2015 EWJDT Request for Proposals. Regional Coordinators cannot address EPA RFP ranking criteria issues but would welcome your interest in the EWDJT program.

Region 1—Kathleen Castagna, 617.918.1429, castagna.kathleen@epa.gov

Region 2—Schenine Mitchell, 212.637.3282, mitchell.schenine@epa.gov

Region 3—Jeff Barnett, 215.814.3246, barnett.jeff@epa.gov

Region 4—Kathleen Curry, 404.229.6354, curry.kathleen@epa.gov

Region 5—Linda Morgan, 312.886.4747, morgan.linda@epa.gov

Region 6—Amber Perry, 214.665.3172, perry.amber@epa.gov

Region 7—Alma Moreno-Lahm, 913.551.7380, lahm.alma@epa.gov

Region 8—Christina Wilson, 303.312.6706, wilson.christina@epa.gov

Region 9—Noemi Emeric-Ford, 213.244.1821, emeric-ford.noemi@epa.gov

Region 10—Robert Tan, 206.553.2580, tan.robert@epa.gov

HMTRI Brownfields Toolbox website

All of the resource materials from the *2014 Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting* are now available on the *HMTRI Brownfields Toolbox* website at <http://brownfields-toolbox.org/announcements/2014-annual-job-training-grantee-meeting/>. These resources include:

- Meeting agenda
- Attendee list
- Compilation of notes taken during small-group sessions
- Meeting presentations (ACRES, OSHA Safety Course, etc.)
- EPA Office of Water (everything that was included on the EPA flash drives)
- Grantee contributions (everything that was included on the HMTRI flash drive)
- Fulfilling EPA Grant Requirements (information distributed in small-group session)

Networking opportunities

Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting

The *HMTRI Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting* is mandatory for all EWDJT grantees. Active PLC members are also invited. The 2015 meeting will be held Wednesday and Thursday, August 19–20, 2015, in Alexandria, VA, with travel days of August 18 and August 21.

The dates and location were based on feedback after last year's meeting:

- 82% want to continue holding the meeting in Alexandria, VA
- 94% want the full two-day format to continue
- 91% want the participation of EPA upper-level management to continue

Active PLC members will also be invited to this informative workshop.

Lodging costs for three nights lodging will be provided. Participants need to budget for transportation and meals.

2015 National Brownfields Training Conference

The National Brownfields 2015 Training Conference will be held in Chicago, IL, on September 2–4, 2015. The conference will be held at the Chicago Hilton on Michigan Avenue. Additional meeting space and sleeping rooms will be available at the Palmer House Hilton. Please visit the Conference Website for additional information at www.brownfieldsconference.org. Registration for Brownfields 2015 is now open with reduced registration for early birds until February.

What topics are included in the program?

- Environmental assessment and cleanup
- Traditional and innovative financing approaches
- Marketing, real estate and economic development
- Planning strategies for better communities
- Incorporating sustainability into redevelopment activities
- Civic and community engagement
- Addressing liability and enforcement issues
- State, tribal and local partnerships

HMTRI has submitted a request to conduct a roundtable session for EWDJT grantees. We would like to organize an open discussion with all our EWDJT grantees and interested stakeholders.

EPA grantees are encouraged to submit ideas showcasing their individual accomplishments and good work.

National Environmental Justice Conference and Training Program

Leaders from various sectors will engage in three days of free exchange of new ideas and new approaches to environmental justice. This interactive training session will feature voices of experience, research, discussions, and thought-provoking dialogue. The program format will feature needs and challenges of communities, governments, municipalities, tribes, faith-based organizations, and others with an interest in environmental matters and environmental justice. It will highlight programs and collaborations that work, as well as initiatives that will not prove successful. Program speakers will feature representatives from Federal and state agencies, local governments, tribes, community groups, business and industry, public interest groups, academia, and other entities. This interactive forum will give conference participants the opportunity to network with a variety of interests from diverse quarters. All conference participants will realize informative and productive resources that can support their individual program goals and objectives. Conference participants will also see examples of approaches that produce positive results through innovation and collaboration. All in all, the conference will prove beneficial and informative to participants.

The 2015 National Environmental Justice Conference and Training Program will be held at The Howard University School of Law and The Washington Marriott at Metro Center on March 11–13, 2015.

Good Jobs, Green Jobs 2015

The Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conference will begin on April 13, 2015, at the Washington Hilton Hotel. Registration will open soon, but for now, make sure you're free to join hundreds of labor, environmental, business, non-profit, and civic leaders for Good Jobs, Green Jobs 2015.

Using the HMTRI Listserve to Ask Questions

The HMTRI Grantee and Community Outreach Listserv has been updated to include all of the new grantees who attended the last *Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting* in Alexandria, VA. For some of you, this is new information. For others, this is a reminder of the benefits of using this ListServe as a networking tool.

Using this ListServe is just like sending a normal email. The only difference is that a single email address includes many recipients. Members of this ListServe include attendees of this year's All-Grantee meeting and past grantee meetings. The email address to use to post a message to this ListServe is jtgrantees@ateec.org. You may want to add this to your email address book.

When you send an email to the ListServe, you will receive an automated response telling you that your message is waiting for approval by the moderator. The ListServe is set up this way to prevent spam and automated Outlook Office Assistant messages from being sent to all members. The moderator is Glo Hanne who attends to these approvals as quickly as possible.

Funding and coordination opportunities

Environmental Education Grants Program

Under the Environmental Education Grants Program, EPA seeks grant proposals from eligible applicants to support environmental education projects that promote environmental awareness and stewardship, and help provide people with the skills to take responsible actions to protect the environment. This grant program provides financial support for projects that design, demonstrate, and/or disseminate environmental education practices, methods, or techniques.

The 2014-2015 EE Grants Program includes two Requests for Proposals (RFPs), also known as Solicitation Notices. Proposals under the EE Model Grants RFP are being accepted through February 2, 2015. Proposals under the EE Local Grants RFP are being accepted through March 6, 2015. For more detail, visit <http://www2.epa.gov/education/environmental-education-ee-grants>.

21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21st CSC)

Letters of Interest are once again being accepted for the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21st CSC). The edited Federal Register Notice (FRN) omits specific references to dates regarding duration of membership and deadlines to submit Letters of Interest. Instead, the FRN now states that Letters of Interest may be submitted and will be reviewed on a rolling or as-needed basis.

Ten new organizations have been approved for 21CSC membership, bringing the total number of 21CSC member organizations to 162 to date. As always, the complete list of 21CSC programs can be viewed on the partnership website at www.21csc.org.

Several 21CSC programs and leaders were recognized as winners for The Corps Network's Corpsmember of the Year, Corps Legacy Achievement, and Projects of the Year awards. As an additional reminder, the 21CSC Champion of the Year will be announced during the Corps Network's 2015 National Conference in February in Washington, D.C. If you haven't done so already, please consider your colleagues and partners for this recognition.

Please contact Levi Novey, Director of Communications & Marketing, at The Corps Network at lnovey@corpsnetwork.org ASAP!

Operation AmeriCorps

The link to the official Operation AmeriCorps webpage is below, it offers great information about what the initiative is, and how to apply. <http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps/operation-ameri-corps>

Overview

Operation AmeriCorps is a new program to help tribal and local leaders use AmeriCorps to accomplish big things in their community. As part of Operation AmeriCorps, tribal and local leaders are being asked to identify a high-priority local challenge that AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps NCCC and/or AmeriCorps VISTA members can address in a relatively short period of time (no more than two years).

The grant competition is open exclusively to tribal and local governments, including counties, cities, towns, and school districts; and state service commissions. They are looking for proposals that are place-based, coordinated with existing community organizations, and with transformational outcomes.

The solution may be a new initiative, or it may use national service to scale up an existing successful effort, but in either case AmeriCorps must be the additive ingredient to achieve transformative change at the local level.

Year 2015 Operation AmeriCorps competition has two funding priorities. Applicants may choose to apply to either of the priorities.

- The first priority focus is narrowly tailored to focus on specific post-secondary outcomes for students.
- The second priority is more flexible and allows localities to identify their most pressing challenge.

Grant Funding Guidance for State and Tribal Response Programs 2015

Section 128(a) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), as amended, authorizes a noncompetitive \$50 million grant program to establish and enhance state and tribal response programs. Generally, these response programs address the assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of brownfields sites and other sites with actual or perceived contamination. This document provides guidance that will enable states and tribes to apply for and use Fiscal Year 2015 section 128(a) funds. The application deadline is January 31, 2015. For more information and to view the guidance, please visit

http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/state_tribal/fund_guide.htm

Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreements

“Environmental Justice cooperative agreements empower communities to implement environmental protection projects locally,” said EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy. “With these agreements, EPA advances our commitment to communities by providing financial and technical assistance to take action against environmental harm.”

In 2003, EPA’s Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) launched the first solicitation for the EJCS Cooperative Agreement Program. Since the Program’s inception, EPA has provided funding to 50 projects to help communities understand and address exposure to environmental harms and risks. Each of this year’s recipients are awarded up to \$120,000 to support two-year projects, including identifying and reducing sources of air pollution, reducing lead exposure in homes of low-income residents, and the cleanup and repurposing of community dump sites. Projects must use the Collaborative Problem

Solving model, comprised of seven elements of a successful collaborative partnership, to address local environmental and/or public health issues.

Environmental justice is defined as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race or income, in the environmental decision-making process. These awards represent EPA's commitment to promoting localized, community-based actions to address environmental justice issues.

Please visit <http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/resources/publications/grants/cps-project-abstracts-2014.pdf> for a complete listing of the 2014 Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreement recipients and project descriptions. More information about EPA's Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem Solving Cooperative Agreement Program: <http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/grants/ej-cps-grants.html>.

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has posted a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants at www.grants.gov. Public housing authorities, local governments, nonprofits, tribal entities, and for-profit developers are eligible to apply. Applications must present a plan to revitalize a severely distressed public and/or HUD-assisted multifamily housing project located in a distressed neighborhood into a viable, mixed-income community. Applications are due Monday, February 9, 2015. Find the full application package at www.grants.gov. Click on Search Grants. The CFDA number is 14.889. Find additional information at http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/cn/fy14funding.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Next PLC Session: February 4, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. EST

Feel free to invite a guest! Send your contact information to Mike Senew at msenew@aol.com.

Visit our *HMTRI Brownfields Toolbox* Web site at <http://www.brownfields-toolbox.org> for more information on Brownfields Job Training programs. All PLC session notes and recordings are also located on the *Brownfields Toolbox* website at <http://brownfields-toolbox.org/plc-corner/>.

NOTE: The PLC brings together ideas and opinions of individuals interested in environmental workforce development and training. Ideas and opinions are not those of EPA, its policy or opinions and should not be taken as official guidance.