

June 7, 2011

Notes from Brownfields Learning Community (PLC) Session #43 (Cycle 4)

Topics: Funding Sources
Starting a Program
Sustaining a Program

NOTES FROM SESSION 43

Status of this year's Environmental Job Development and Training grant review

Announcements of this year's grant awardees are expected in the next few weeks. We will post additional information to the listserv when it becomes available. Issues associated with funding and sustaining a job development programs include the following:

- How and where can startup funding be found?
- What types of funding are available?
- What are the requirements for obtaining those funds?
- Are funding sources available for job training programs when Federal funds are exhausted?
- Are federal funds available from other agencies besides EPA?
- How can leveraging and in kind strategies help fund job training programs?

Funding for sustainable environmental jobs training programs comes from a variety of sources including:

- Federal agencies
- State & local agencies
- Public and private foundations, trusts, and benefactors
- Private sector benefactors
- Community groups, community colleges, nonprofits, and individual contributions
- Litigation and court settlements

This week's discussion centered on local sources of funding and startup resources. In the next session, we will examine state & federal resources.

At first review, most communities interested in developing a job training program look to federal grants as their only available source of funding. For new, small, or startup job training programs, local funding is the place to start – not the federal government. Federal funding requirements have become increasingly stringent as the number of grant applications increased. The last request for proposals (RFP or RFA request for assistance) for EPA environmental job development and training programs resulted in over 100 proposals with 10-12 grants to be awarded. A 10% award rate requires grantees to demonstrate an exemplary history and capability delivering environmental job training and placement services. It also requires the ability to leverage federal funding demonstrating program sustainability when federal assistance ends.

- Foundation and private sector funding are excellent sources for startup funding and later for leveraging state and federal funding.
- Federal grants should be regarded as supplemental startup funds that must be replaced and leveraged during the growth phase of the project.
- Local foundations, trusts, corporations, and individual benefactors contribute to an overall sustainable budget that can continue beyond the end of federal assistance.

As previously mentioned, private and foundation funding could be a significant resource for starting and sustaining a green jobs training program.

- Local foundation and private assistance can be reoccurring – as part of a sustainable budget, job development and training can be funded year after year.
- Local foundation and private assistance can be less competitive if similar jobs programs are not already available in the community.

- Local foundation and private assistance links with community awareness, identification with the community, and “pride in community”. Community involvement becomes a primary “building block” for establishing a sustainable community centric program.
- Local foundation and private assistance may not have the stringent requirements associated with federal assistance. If benefactors like and identify with the proposed program, they may choose to fund its development unconditionally without demonstration of experience, training, or placement history.
- Local foundation and private assistance may not have restrictions with regard to allowable costs as do federal grants. Less restrictions on “use of funds” provides more latitude in developing program offerings in areas such as life skills, participant stipends, day care, ancillary participant assistance, and supplemental skills training.
- As job training program development progresses, local funding can build a base upon which federal assistance is used to accelerate and expand growth and depth of the program.

Reporting, placement, and tracking requirements are often not as comprehensive as those associated with federal grants

A more detailed discussion of potential funding sources related to green jobs and Brownfields job training funding can be found at: www.brownfields-toolbox.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Next PLC Session: Wednesday, June 22, 2011
 2:00pm EDT

Topic: Funding Sources
 Program Sustainability

Feel free to invite a guest! Send your contact information to Mike Senew at msenew@aol.com.
Visit our *Brownfields Toolbox* Web site at <http://www.brownfields-toolbox.org> for more information on Brownfields Job Training programs.