

January 15, 2011

Notes from Brownfields Professional Learning Community (PLC) #35

Session Leader: Mike Senew

Topic: Introduction to the new EPA Request for Proposal

NOTES FROM SESSION 35

Guidelines and a Request for Proposals for the new "FY11 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grant" formerly referred to as the "Brownfields Job Training Grant" have been issued. During this PLC session, we discussed an overview of the grant request, timelines, and strategies for submitting successful proposals. We also continued discussing issues and questions regarding the grant submission process.

ATTENTION

The RFP has been issued at <http://www.epa.gov/oswer/docs/grants/epa-oswer-oblr-11-01.pdf>. The due date is March 18, 2011.

Useful Resources when writing your grant

Check out www.grants.gov even if you intend to submit a hard copy application. Grants.gov is the master website for all federal grants with many links and downloadable resources.

You may want to check out EPA's Grants and Debarments website at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/>. This site provides detailed information of grant regulations and EPA policy.

If you are new to regulations related to tax exempt organizations, another FYI site you may wish to check out is Stay Exempt at <http://www.stayexempt.org/>.

If you do not have a DUNS number, you may want to check out this site:
<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>.

Do you have questions regarding the new RFP? Email them to Mike Senew at msenew@aol.com. Your questions will be shared with the group and passed onto EPA.

Key points in the RFP

Make sure you qualify before investing more time.

What should you be doing now?

1. Threshold Eligibility Criteria will likely be reviewed by contractors as gatekeepers. If you don't meet the eligibility criteria, your grant will be "DOA."
 - a. Can you start a job training program using these grant funds if you don't fit any of the organizations on page 13 of the RFP? Yes, but you need to "hook up" with one that qualifies. Preferably, your partner will have fiscal, accounting, and training experience with federal grants. This will help in responding to the ranking criteria. As a nonprofit, you will need documentation of nonprofit status and a Dun and Bradstreet Data

- a. Scan employers, community colleges, universities, and trade organizations for potential trainers, facilities, and placement resources.
- b. Establish a relationship with local organized labor.
- c. Become part of the local job development and training community.
6. Work backwards from your employment needs assessment to curriculum offerings, matching the first two with target participant populations likely to succeed in those jobs.
7. Begin a short list of certifications and training you will be providing based on your needs assessment and target participant group.
8. **If possible, participate and document participation in a Brownfields public hearing.** A public announcement of “intention to develop an environmental job training program” will go a long way in developing a fundable proposal. Linking this with an existing Brownfields public hearing is an excellent approach. Ask if you can have a few minutes as part of the public hearing process required by Brownfield projects. Announce your intention to submit a job development and training proposal. Ask for support and advice.
9. As part of every activity just discussed, contacts should be asked for letters of support and input on possible additional community resources. REMEMBER, letters of support cannot be “cookie cutter” or form letters. Early in the grant writing process is the best time for assistance. While employers may not be able to commit to jobs, they can offer employment consideration as part of a letter of support.
10. Begin a short list of members to participate on your advisory board. These individuals may also become excellent references for the grant submission. Remember, the best advisors are individuals who will hire your graduates or contribute to your program in a meaningful way.

Regional Environmental Job Development and Training Contacts

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MARK YOUR CAENDAR

Next PLC Session: Wednesday, January 19, 2011
 2:00pm EST

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.