

January 17, 2018



Notes from the Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)—Cycle 18, Session 1

This series of bi-weekly phone calls examines effective Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) strategies from experienced grantees. PLC calls share ideas among successful grantees and prepare interested organizations for the next EPA Request for Proposals. Calls will be a mix of open discussion, workforce development news, resources, and presentations from current grantees.

Topics: 1. News from Washington and HMTRI

2. Questions from PLC members
3. What to do if your proposal did not meet the threshold criteria
4. What to do if your proposal has been selected for further review
5. Welcome to the Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)
6. Items of interest for those new to the EWDJT program
7. Professional development for environmental trainers
8. Funding opportunities
9. Job opportunities
10. EPA regional job training coordinators

1. NEWS FROM WASHINGTON AND HMTRI

The deadline for EWDJT submissions was December 15, 2017. Those who did not meet threshold criteria should have been notified. All other proposals will go on to the “ranking criteria” review. If your proposal has been rejected please read the section on “what to do if your proposal did not meet the threshold criteria”.

Glo announced her retirement at the end of last year. We wish her the best and expect that she will visit us from “time to time” throughout the New Year.

Heather Ballou has taken Glo’s place, with Michael Senew remaining as technical consultant and Bruce Diamond as logistics coordinator. As the principle contact, send questions and suggestions to Heather at hkballou@eicc.edu or (563) 441-4093.

2. QUESTIONS FROM PLC MEMBERS

If you have questions you would like addressed, send it to Heather Ballou at hkballou@eicc.edu.

We would like to establish a new EWDJT program in our community. With an established EWDJT program nearby, how can we fairly compete in the next round of reviews?

EWDJT programs are not limited by geographical area. They are limited by target community. Over the years, there have been multiple programs serving a common geographical area. They have demonstrated that different populations are served and target communities do not overlap. The same criteria applies to environmental training funded by other Federal agencies such as NIEHS, DOL or HUD. Proposals are reviewed independently and objectively. It is not predetermined that existing programs have an overwhelming advantage. We have seen excellent and experienced programs “out competed” by more comprehensive proposals. EWDJT proposals are “graded on a curve” with the best being funded.

3. WHAT TO DO IF YOUR PROPOSAL DID NOT MEET THE THRESHOLD CRITERIA

By now, those programs not meeting threshold criteria as part of the FY18 EWDJT funding cycle will have received rejection notices.

Important

1. EPA encourages those not funded in FY18 to reapply for the next round of EWDJT grants. The RFP is usually issued as early as November. Preparation is detailed, so now is the time to begin planning, developing partnerships, and conducting community and labor market assessments.
2. If your proposal was not accepted for further evaluation, please contact your Regional Job Training Coordinator (see section 10) and ask for a review of your application. While your requests should be made within 14 days of notification, they may be happy to go over your proposal and provide a constructive critique.
3. If possible, register for the HMTRI All Grantee Meeting as soon as possible. At the meeting PLC members can network with current grantees and meet with EPA Regional coordinators in preparation for the next Request for Proposals.
4. Those interested in submitting a proposal to develop an EWDJT program in their community need to begin now and learn as much about environmental workforce development before program planning begins.

4. WHAT TO DO IF YOUR PROPOSAL HAS BEEN SELECTED FOR FURTHER REVIEW

If you have not been rejected for meeting basic threshold requirements, your proposal is now being evaluated based on your response to questions presented in the ranking criteria. Ranking proposals is difficult and time consuming. Reviewers will spend the next two months ordering proposals from best to least comprehensive. Top ranking proposals will go on to a final review. Additional factors and special situations will be considered and FY18 funded applicants will be notified. The next two months can be nerve racking and there is little applicants can do. However, here are some hints.

1. Keep stakeholders and supporters informed of the grant review process.
2. Note that those mentioned in the grant may be contacted regarding their involvement in the program.
3. Be briefed and ready to answer questions that may arise.
4. Keep in touch with the principle contact who will be informed regarding a potential award.

5. Stay positive and keep your working group together with regular informational conference calls.

Updated project timeline and schedule

Based on previous years, below is an estimated timetable for submitting proposals, receiving funding notifications and finalizing work plans. It provides a rough idea of the EWDJT award process when talking with potential partners and stakeholders.

- Proposals were due– December 15th
- Rejections for not meeting threshold criteria – First or second week of January 2018
- Professional Learning Community resumes (PLC) – See biweekly schedule at end of this session notes
- Awards to be announced –March/April 2018
- Award letter and acceptance by applicant—May/June 2018—Funds may be spent up to 90 days before final paperwork after official acceptance.
- Terms and Conditions with approved work plans – July/August 2018
- HMTRI Annual All-Grantee Meeting –August 8-9, 2018
- Official notice that funds are available for spending – August/September 2018
- Training and execution of work plans including quarterly and ACRES reports – September 2018 and ongoing
- FY 2019 EWDJT RFP issued (tentative) – Late Fall 2018

5. WELCOME TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL WORKFORCE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY (PLC)

Today's PLC is not to be an infomercial for HMTRI and the Environmental Workforce Development Professional Learning Community (PLC) rather we want to introduce ourselves to new PLC members and continue our relationship with current grantees and alumni of the EWDJT program.

The Hazardous Materials Training and Research Institute (HMTRI) has worked with various EPA programs for over 30 years under a variety of cooperative agreements. Grants have included technician training, curriculum development, capacity building and technical assistance to communities interested in establishing local environmental workforce programs. The HMTRI effort has been leveraged with assistance from the Advanced Technology Environmental and Energy Center (ATEEC) funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Partnership for Environmental Education (PETE) funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health science (NIEHS) and Eastern Iowa Community College (EICC).

Since the beginning of the Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Program (EWDJT), HMTRI has assisted communities establish, deliver and sustain quality environmental training to community residents. Here are some of the strategies HMTRI uses to engage and support the EWDJT effort.

- Brownfields-Toolbox.org– A website and repository for all things related to workforce development and job training.
- **Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meetings** - Networking grantees for peer to peer idea exchange. Held in Alexandria, VA each year after new grantees have been selected.
- **Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Update Webinar**– Updating communities on the latest developments and best practices of successful EWDJT programs.
- **CONNECT News**- CONNECT is HMTRI’s acronym for Community support, networking, and assistance for environmental career training. Each bimonthly e-publication features contentious issues faced by EWDJT programs.
- **Grantee and Community Outreach Listserv**– The HMTRI listserv is a communications link for current announcements and request for information regarding environmental training and job development.
- **Grantee Scans (Certified Employee Finder)** – Collecting and sharing EWDJT information regarding program competencies, training schedules and graduate certifications with potential employers and other grantees.
- **EWDJT Social Media Directory** –Websites, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Google +. Social platforms are “hot linked” for easy navigating.
- **Best Practices Guide** – A compilation of best practices and strategies from successful EWDJT programs.
- **Environmental Workforce Development Professional Learning Community (PLC)** – Biweekly informal conference calls featuring successful grantees and discussions on EWDJT topics of interest.
- **Individualized Technical Assistance** – “One on one” assistance regarding EWDJT issues.

6. ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR THOSE NEW TO EWDJT PROGRAM

Brownfields-Toolbox

EPA documents including RFP guidelines, post session notes, session recordings and much more about environmental workforce development programs are available at the HMTRI website. Brownfields-toolbox.org

To join the PLC distribution list, contact Heather Ballou at hkballou@eicc.edu. Participants on the list receive post-session notes for each session before they are posted to the website. The link to the post-session notes on the website is <http://brownfields-toolbox.org/plc-corner/>.

Visitors to the website may want to also look at the Start a Program section. Click on the Start a Program tab along the top. Many components regularly updated, so check back often.

Sites providing the RFP, tips and FAQs.

[FY2018 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grant Guidelines \(PDF\)](#)

[FY2018 Frequently Asked Questions \(PDF\)](#)

[Tips for Submitting Proposals through Grants.gov \(PDF\)](#)

[FY18 EWDJT Outreach Webinar \(PDF\)](#)

Additional resources for EWDJT proposal development and submission can be found at [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

7. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL TRAINERS

The GreatEST Institute

June 4-15, 2018

Davenport, Iowa

Instructors are prepared through a 10-day train-the-trainer program called the GreatEST Institute (Great Environmental Safety Training Institute) to deliver required certifications for public and private responders and workers including:

- 40-hour Waste Site Worker Health and Safety
- 24-hour Industrial Emergency Response
- DOT HazMat Awareness
- Confined Space Non-Entry Rescue
- Hazard Awareness and Communication
- Disaster Site Worker Awareness

Instructors use Community College Consortium for Health and Safety Training (CCCHST) curriculum to train workers and responders in their local area and report to PETE the number of courses they provide, for which they are provided a small reimbursement. PETE reports these numbers to NIEHS. CCCHST members may charge for the courses offered in their local area. Instructors reporting numbers may return at least every two years for Instructor Refresher training offered at colleges across the nation.

In 2016, membership numbered 157 training organizations with 214 trainers in 35 states and two U.S. territories. CCCHST institutions offered 3,710 classes to 60,888 students generating 409,579 contact hours this past year.

CCCHST is sponsored by the Partnership for Environmental Technology Education (PETE) headquartered in South Portland, Maine. PETE is one of twenty-two affiliated councils of the 1,150-member American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and the only council whose core mission is environmental, health, safety, and security training. PETE has more than 400 community, technical, and tribal college members for whom PETE provides faculty development programs, workshops, and institutes. This program is supported with grant funding from the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences

(NIEHS) Grant #5U45ES019377-08. Twenty scholarships covering travel, tuition, lodging, and some meals are available from PETE.

[Electronic Applications](#) are available on PETE's website. The complete online application package is due by February 28, 2018. For more information, contact Patti Thompson at pattijthompson@gmail.com.

8. FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Grant Program

2018 Request for Proposals

Due Date: Wednesday, January 31, 2018

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Wildlife Habitat Council, in cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, USDA Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, FedEx, and Southern Company are pleased to solicit applications for the 2018 Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration program. The Five Star and Urban Waters program will award approximately \$2 million in grants nationwide.

Projects include a variety of ecological improvements along with targeted community outreach, education and stewardship. Ecological improvements may include one or more of the following: wetland, riparian, forest and coastal habitat restoration; wildlife conservation, community tree canopy enhancement, water quality monitoring, and stormwater management. Projects should also increase access to the benefits of nature, reduce the impact of environmental hazards and engage local communities, particularly underserved communities, in project planning, outreach and implementation.

Go directly to the grant program website at <http://www.nfwf.org/fivestar/Pages/2018rfp.aspx> where you can find the full request for proposals (RFP) and a tip sheet that walks you through the application process and describes what is needed for each question/information prompt. This how-to document is extremely helpful and thorough.

Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreements

2018 Request for Proposals

Full Proposal Due Date: Friday, February 16, 2018

The Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving (EJCPS) Cooperative Agreement Program provides funding to support community-based organizations in their efforts to collaborate and partner with local stakeholder groups (e.g., local businesses and industry, local government, medical providers, and academia) as they develop and implement solutions that address environmental and/or public health issues for underserved communities. The EJCPS program will award approximately \$1.2 million nationwide for this competitive opportunity. EPA anticipates awarding ten cooperative agreements (one in each of the ten EPA Regions) of up to \$120,000 each.

Eligible entities for this opportunity are as follows:

- Incorporated non-profit organizations—including, but not limited to, environmental justice networks, faith based organizations and those affiliated with religious institutions.
- Federally recognized tribal governments—including Alaska Native Villages; OR
- Tribal organizations.

If your organization is NOT eligible, you are encouraged to partner with eligible entities on an EJCPs project. To apply, visit the [EJCPs program website](#) to access the full RFP including instructions on applying through [grants.gov](#).

9. JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Environmental Staffing is looking for Health and Safety professionals for two-five months in Napa Valley, California. Those interested should call or email Dwayne Burnett for details at (704) 529-6707, dwayne@environmentalstaffing.com.

10. EPA REGIONAL JOB TRAINING COORDINATORS

EPA Region 1 Danny Rodriguez	CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT	Phone: (617) 918-1060 E-mail: rodriguez.danny@epa.gov
EPA Region 2 Schenine Mitchell	NJ, NY, PR, VI	Phone: (212) 637-3283 E-mail: mitchell.schenine@epa.gov
EPA Region 3 Jeff Barnett	DE, DC, MD, PA, VA, WV	Phone: (215) 814-3246 E-mail: barnett.jeff@epa.gov
EPA Region 4 Bushra Jawaid	AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN	Phone: (404) 562-8569 E-mail: jawaid.bushra@epa.gov
EPA Region 5 Linda Morgan	IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI	Phone: (312) 886-4747 E-mail: morgan.linda@epa.gov
EPA Region 5 Craig Mankowski		Phone: (312) 886-9493 E-mail: mankowski.craig@epa.gov
EPA Region 6 Rita Ware	AR, LA, NM, OK, TX	Phone: (214) 665-6409 E-mail: ware.rita@epa.gov
EPA Region 7 Alma Moreno Lahm	IA, KS, MO, NE	Phone: (913) 551-7380 E-mail: moreno-lahm.alma@epa.gov
EPA Region 8 Christina Wilson	CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY	Phone: (303) 312-6706 E-mail: wilson.christina@epa.gov
EPA Region 9 Nova Blazej	AZ, CA, HI, NV, AS, GU	Phone: (415) 972-3846 E-mail: blazej.nova@epa.gov
EPA Region 9 Noemi Emeric-Ford		Phone: (213) 244-1821 E-mail: emeric-ford.noemi@epa.gov
EPA Region 10 Robert Tan	AK, ID, OR, WA	Phone: (206) 553-2580 E-mail: tan.robert@epa.gov

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Next PLC Session: January 31, 2018, 2:00 p.m. ET
319.527.3513, access code 550105#
Please call in five minutes early.

Upcoming PLC sessions: PLC Date
184 January 31
185 February 14
186 February 28
187 March 14
188 March 28
189 April 11
190 April 25
191 May 9
192 May 23

Feel free to invite a guest! Send your contact information to Heather Ballou at hkballou@eicc.edu.



Visit our [HMTRI Brownfields Toolbox](#) website for more information on Brownfields Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training programs. All [PLC session notes and recordings](#) are also located on the website. For those interested in providing content or suggestions, please contact Heather Ballou at hkballou@eicc.edu.

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