

March 14, 2018



Notes from the Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)—Cycle 18, Session 5

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. Developing Core Curriculum – open discussion
 4. Meetings of interest
 5. What to do if your proposal has been selected for further review
 6. Updated project timeline and schedule
 7. EPA Regional Job Training Coordinators
 8. Tune into upcoming PLC calls
 9. Attachment – Registration for the 2018 All Grantee Meeting and Workshop

1. NEWS FROM WASHINGTON AND HMTRI

Announcements for FY18 Environmental workforce development and job training awards should be made in May. The next two months can be “nerve racking” but there are a few things applicants can do. See some hints in section 5 of these post session notes including a tentative timetable of events in section 6.

For those thinking of submitting an application next fall, begin organizing your environmental workforce development team and researching successful job training programs.

Annual HMTRI social media and curriculum scan

Once each year HMTRI conducts a social media and curriculum scan to collect the following information.

- Social media and marketing platforms
- Graduation dates with estimated number of graduates in each cohort
- Training and certifications held by graduates
- Life skills and services offered to program participants

Information provided can link national employers with job openings to EWDJT programs with graduates. In addition to employment opportunities, social media and curriculum information allows stakeholders to learn more about EWDJT programs. The final compilation will be distributed on the HMTRI listserv, posted to the Brownfields Toolbox website and shared with prospective national employers. You do not

have to be a current grantee to complete the scan. If you wish to see last year's scan reports, please visit these toolbox for the [Social Media Directory](#) and [Certified Employee Finder](#).

2018 Annual All-Grantee Meeting and Workshop – August 8th and 9th

PLC members are invited along with current and alumni EWDJT grantees to this special workshop. EPA headquarters, regional job training coordinators, grantees, PLC members and special guests will be networking in small groups. Hotel and working meals are provided (participants must cover travel and dinner expenses). **See registration and information attached to these post session notes.** Send any questions and suggestions you may have 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.

Will EPA fund training to obtain a driver's license? How about a commercial driver's license? How can I tell if EPA will fund any particular course we are thinking of offering?

Most determinations are clear but there are grey areas when EPA guidance is required. Generally, personal driver's license training would be considered a life skill and needs to be offered with leveraged resources. However a commercial driver's license, if required to haul hazardous materials or solid waste, could be supported.

For general guidance, training that involves assessment, sampling, analysis, cleanup or remediation and it is consistent with EPA training priorities is fundable. To be sure, touch base with your EPA Regional Job Training Coordinator for clarification (contact information appears in section 7).

3. DEVELOPING CORE CURRIULUM – OPEN DISCUSSION.

Today we continued a discussion on training which began with the HMTRI webinar and continued with Florida State College at Jacksonville's presentation on training delivery methodology. This discussion addresses core curriculum supported under the EWDJT grant. Today we are only addressing the technical core. The next PLC will address life skills training and student services not supported by the EPA grant.

The "issue at hand" is how to decide what kind of training is most likely to result in employment, promote high student retention rates and fulfill EPA priorities and objectives. To answer these questions, let's look at the EPA brownfields training program its mission and restrictions. Then we can apply a series of filters to establish a balanced, fundable training curriculum.

Filter #1. Goals and objectives of the EPA Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Program (EWDJT)

Curriculum selection begins with goals and objectives of the EPA Environmental Workforce program, which with minor revisions, have remained the same since established almost two decades ago. Understanding EPA's objectives are essential if applicants hope to receive funding. Program priorities and expectations are expressed in detail as part of the [Request for Proposal Guidelines](#).

Overall goals of the EPA Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Program include the following:

1. Further environmental justice by ensuring that residents living in communities by economic disinvestment, health disparities, and environmental contamination, including low-income, minority, and tribal communities, have an opportunity to reap the benefits of revitalization and environmental cleanup.
2. Train unemployed and under-employed residents of communities impacted by a variety of waste facilities, blighted properties, contaminated sites, and other environmental and economic issues.
3. Train local residents for environmental jobs that contractors may otherwise fill from outside the affected community.
4. Target dislocated workers, or those laid off as a result of recent manufacturing plant closures, severely under-employed individuals, or unemployed individuals, including low-income and minority residents of waste-impacted communities, veterans, and those with little to no advanced education.

Additional expectations guiding EWDJT funding include the following.

1. Training must result in high retention and placement rates exceeding 70%
2. Training must conform to environmental topic areas whose offices support EWDJT
3. Only assessment, remediation, cleanup, health and safety training is supported by EPA
4. Life skills training and student services must be supported by leveraged sources

Filter #2. Curriculum and EPA's EWDJT funding priorities

This far, it is clear that EPA wants to target underserved, underemployed and disadvantaged residents of distressed communities. The next filter in establishing a core curriculum is developing courses that the agency is willing to support. Originally the EWDJT was entirely supported by EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response as part of the Brownfields program. As expected, training was restricted to the overall mission of employing graduates in brownfields assessment and cleanup jobs. As the EWDJT matured, additional EPA offices contributed to environmental training allowing new opportunities for an expanded curriculum. Each year, as part of the Request for Proposals (RFP), EPA includes training priorities and the amount contributed by each program office (see page 9 of last year's RFP). Here is a list of fundable environmental training available from EPA as part of the EWDJT program. Note, for example, in FY18 air programs did not contribute to EWDJT. As a result, air pollution related courses would not be supported by current contributors to the EWDJT program.

- Brownfields hazardous waste assessment and cleanup training, including petroleum cleanup training
- Solid Waste Management or cleanup training
- Superfund site cleanup and innovative and alternative treatment technologies training
- Wastewater treatment training
- Emergency planning, preparedness, and response training
- Enhanced environmental health and safety training
- Integrated Pest Management (IPM) training
- Alternative energy technologies (e.g. solar installation training, training in the preparation of formerly contaminated sites for renewable energy purposes, etc.)

It is understandable that each program office would like to see training proportional to their support. The challenge for EWDJT applicants is to align their training, labor market assessment and program priorities with those of EPA.

Filter #3. Employer needs

Understanding what EPA will fund, it is now time to turn to employing graduates. The demise of all training programs is an inability to place graduates. EPA expects placement rates exceeding 70% with many successful grantees delivering 100% placement rates. Input from prospective employers is essential in determining skills and certifications they require when filling positions. Community and labor market assessments are “OK”, but guidance from employers and an advisory board (which includes potential employers) works best. Commitments from employers and commitments to train to employer standards is what successful programs seek.

Employers, not grant writers, should determine the curriculum. Employers are more than happy to provide their expectations of job applicants including skill and knowledge requirements.

Before deciding to submit an EWDJT proposal, before plans are presented to local government, and before stakeholders and supporters are recruited, employers must demonstrate and even commit to looking at graduates for potential employment. If program planning and curriculum development cannot pass this filter, application for federal assistance should be reconsidered.

Filter #4. Target community and program participants

So far, we understand EPA and employer priorities. Now it’s time to begin developing a curriculum that match employer needs with program participants’ abilities. Aligning employer needs with the target student population will determine what the curriculum should look like. Those issues include the following.

- Educational background, skill and knowledge base needed to complete training
- Local and transportation issues associated with training
- Physical requirements associated with available jobs
- Length and depth of training required to gain employment

Filter #4 is really a matter of balancing the curriculum to suit employer needs with proposed participant abilities and needs. When a balance cannot be made, the proposed target student population must be reviewed, the curriculum revised or the employer base expanded. For example, if the only job opportunities require clean criminal records, targeting ex-offenders would not be wise and the search for potential employers needs to be expanded.

Filter #5. Availability of trainers, facilities and leveraged partners

After a preliminary curriculum has been established, it is important to find facilities, instructors, and leveraged partners to deliver training. A few issues in finding facilities and instructors include the following.

- Trainers may need to be certified and capable of delivering instruction and certifications
- Trainers are often available from a local college (as leveraged partners, sub grantees or contractors)
- Training can be provided by another governmental program willing to contribute unsupported training or services
- Facilities may be contributed by local governmental agency or social service organization
- Trainers may be employed as consultants or contractors providing “fee for service” instruction
- Instructors must be available per the proposed training schedule
- Potential employers may donate facilities, equipment and instructors as leveraged partners
- Community stakeholders often provide facilities and services to local nonprofits

Examples of core curricula from last year’s grantee scan

The [Certified Employee Finder](#) has examples of courses offered by current grantees. While they all include OSHA 1910.120 (HAZWOPPER) as required, most also include OSHA 10 for its safety training as well as First Aid/CPR. Offerings may change from cohort-to-cohort depending on local priorities, schedules, and employment opportunities. Note, not only the variety of topic areas but the number of courses offered. These disparities are largely due to factors we discussed today. Each program has responded to local employer needs, program capabilities and their individual student population.

The next PLC will explore curricula and student services not funded but essential in developing a comprehensive EWDJT program.

4. MEETINGS OF INTEREST

Register Now for Central Appalachian Regional Brownfields Summit

April 10 – 11, 2018

Pulaski, Virginia

Registration for the [2018 Central Appalachian Regional Brownfields Summit](#) in Pulaski, Virginia on April 10-11 is now open! This is a great opportunity to learn from and about brownfield projects across the

region and to connect with local, state, federal, and private sector experts in brownfields redevelopment. The conference will be held at the Jackson Park Inn, site of an innovative brownfield redevelopment. Space is limited, so register right away to reserve your spot! For more information on the Summit, including the agenda, lodging information, and more, visit the [Conference website!](#)

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

If your FY18 EWDJT proposal was not rejected for meeting basic threshold requirements, it 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” but there are a few things applicants can do. 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.
6. Keep you team together and active
7. EWDJT does not have to be an “all or nothing” proposition (a topic for future PLC discussion)

6. 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.

- Professional Learning Community continues (PLC) – See biweekly schedule below
- Awards to be announced –May 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
- FY 2019 EWDJT request for proposals (tentative) – Late Fall 2018

7. 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
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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

8. UPCOMING PLC CALLS

Join our 30 minute discussion with EPA EWDJT grantees, alumni and new interested stakeholders.

PLCs give grantees a chance to highlight their programs and an opportunity for others to learn from their experience.

Email questions or to be placed on the PLC register send contact information to hkballou@eicc.edu.

Next PLC Session: March 28, 2018, 2:00 p.m. ET
319.527.3513, access code 550105#
Please call in five minutes early.

Upcoming PLC sessions: PLC Date

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.



9. REGISTRATION FOR THE 2018 ALL GRANTEE MEETING AND WORKSHOP

DATE: January 17, 2018

TO: Environmental Job Development and Training Grantees

FROM: Heather Ballou, HMTRI

RE: Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting



The Hazardous Materials Training and Research Institute (HMTRI), under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, invite you to attend the **ANNUAL ENVIRONMENTAL JOB DEVELOPMENT ALL-GRANTEE MEETING** on August 8–9, 2018 (travel days August 7 and August 10) in Alexandria, Virginia. All grantees are strongly encouraged to attend. This meeting provides a unique opportunity to share a variety of approaches to Brownfields job training and development. The focus of the meeting is for grantees to exchange information and ideas with each other and with EPA Regional/Headquarters representatives. The goal of the meeting is to assist every grantee to develop their best possible job training program. By attending, you will have the opportunity to share:

1. Information that will include basic program component guidelines necessary for successful completion of your program, initiatives that support and interact with Brownfields activities, key measures and expectations, partnering, and related job development program issues;
2. Project plans and implementation strategies with other grant recipients and your EPA project officer; and
3. Information on available technical resources and technical assistance sources.

The meeting will be held **two FULL days**. Participants will be expected to attend the entire meeting, so please schedule your travel days on August 7 and August 10. HMTRI will pay lodging costs for people from out of town for three nights (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday).

AGENDA DETAILS

The meeting will begin at 8:00 a.m. and adjourn approximately 5:00 p.m. each day. The agenda will consist of 2–4 tracks running concurrently, and large-group sessions. It is helpful when at least two representatives from each program attend as a team in order to take advantage of the concurrent sessions and networking that will take place at the meeting.

All sessions will be informal, and you will be encouraged to participate in all discussions. If you have a question on a particular topic or want to share a best practice, please bring that with you. A draft agenda will be emailed to you before the meeting.

COST

There is no fee to attend. Participants from out of town will have their lodging paid for three nights (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday) through the master contract we have set up with the Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria.

MEETING DETAILS AND HOTEL INFORMATION

WHEN

Wednesday, August 8, 2018 | 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Continental breakfast, working lunch, and breaks will be provided.
Thursday, August 9, 2018 | 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Continental breakfast, working lunch, and breaks will be provided.

CASUAL DRESS IS REQUIRED!

WHERE

Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria, 901 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
Reservations phone number: 1.877.317.5752
Reservation deadline: **MONDAY, JULY 9, 2018 ***

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria. HMTRI will pay lodging costs for people from out of town for three nights (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, August 7–9. You are responsible for making your own hotel reservations. Call the reservations number listed above and identify yourself as being with the **HMTRI BROWNFIELDS ALL-GRANTEE MEETING 2018** to be put in the reserved block of rooms at the group rate of \$119 per night. You can also [book your reservation online](#). As part of this year's contract, all sleeping rooms will have complimentary Internet access.

The deadline for making reservations is **MONDAY, JULY 9.*** After that date, any remaining rooms will be released for general sale and will be handled on a space availability basis at a higher rate. The hotel will ask for your credit card number when you call to make your reservation only to confirm your lodging and to pay for incidentals. The hotel must be notified of any cancellations 72 hours prior to your arrival date. **Charges incurred for rooms not canceled within this time constraint will be billed to your credit card.**

* Reservations made after the deadline may receive a higher rate. You will be responsible for paying the difference between the group rate and the higher rate.

NOTE: Space is limited. Please register for the meeting and make your hotel reservations **NOW** to avoid problems later. ***It is much easier to cancel a hotel reservation than it is to get one at the last minute!***

HOW TO REGISTER

Please send me an email at hkballou@eicc.edu and include:
Your name, organization, address, city/state/zip, phone, fax, and the name of the job training program you are representing or indicate that you are a PLC member. A registration form is also included with this letter that you can fax or email. Emailed registrations are preferred. The registration deadline is **MONDAY, JULY 9.**

The effectiveness of this meeting depends on the participation of EPA regional project officers and a representative from each Job Training program. **You are strongly encouraged to attend.** If you have any questions, please contact me at 563.441.4093 or by email at hkballou@eicc.edu; or contact your Regional EPA Brownfields Project Officer.

Thank you. I hope to see you in August!



REGISTRATION FORM

ANNUAL ENVIRONMENTAL JOB DEVELOPMENT ALL-GRANTEE MEETING

August 8-9, 2018
Alexandria, Virginia

(PLEASE COPY THIS FORM FOR MULTIPLE REGISTRATIONS)

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

Name of Job Training Program you are representing or if you are a PLC member:

If you are unable to register through email,
please fax this registration

BEFORE July 9, 2018

to:

Heather Ballou
563.441.4080 fax

