

OVERVIEW

AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: FY23 GUIDELINES FOR BROWNFIELDS TRAINING, RESEARCH, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT

ACTION: Request for Applications (RFA)

RFA NO.: EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-22-12

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NO.: 66.814

DATE: The closing date and time for receipt of applications is **February 14, 2023**, 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET). Applications must be submitted through www.grants.gov. Applications received after 11:59 p.m. ET on **February 14, 2023**, will not be considered. Please refer to the *Due Date and Submission Instructions* in [Section IV.B.](#) and [Appendix 1](#) for further instructions.

EPA continues to provide flexibility to applicants experiencing challenges related to COVID-19. Please see the **Flexibilities Available to Organizations Impacted by COVID-19** clause in Section IV of EPA's Solicitation Clauses at www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses and the instructions outlined in [Section IV.B.](#) of this announcement.

Note - Prior to naming a contractor (including consultants) or subrecipient in your application as a "partner", please carefully review Section IV.d, "Contracts and Subawards", of EPA's Announcement Clauses that are incorporated by reference in this announcement (See Section I.G). EPA expects recipients of funding to comply with competitive procurement contracting requirements as well as EPA's rule on Participation by Disadvantaged Business Enterprises in EPA Programs in 40 CFR Part 33. The Agency does not accept justifications for sole source contracts for services or products available in the commercial marketplace based on a contractor's role in preparing an application or prior relationships with the contractor that were not established in compliance with competitive procurement requirements. Note that these competitive procurement requirements apply with equal force to contractual relationships established prior to or after the award of EPA funds.

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SECTION I. – FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) was amended by the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act in 2002 to include Section 104(k), which provides federal financial assistance authorities for brownfields revitalization, including grants for training, research, and technical assistance to individuals and organizations, as appropriate, to facilitate the inventory of brownfield sites, site assessments, remediation of brownfield sites, community involvement, or site preparation. The Brownfields Utilization, Investment, and Local Development (BUILD) Act enacted in 2018 reauthorized EPA’s Brownfields Program and made additional amendments to CERCLA that affect EPA’s brownfield grant authorities, and ownership and liability provisions. (Note: References to CERCLA in this solicitation refer to CERCLA as amended by the 2002 Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act and the 2018 BUILD Act.) Cooperative agreements under this funding opportunity will be financed with appropriations made available to EPA under the Investment in Infrastructure and Jobs Law (IIJL) Public Law 117-58.

A **brownfield site is defined** in CERCLA § 101(39) as real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, controlled substances, petroleum or petroleum products, or is mine-scarred land.

A critical part of [EPA’s Brownfields and Land Revitalization Program](#) is to ensure that residents living in communities historically affected by economic disinvestment, health disparities, and environmental contamination have an opportunity to benefit from brownfields redevelopment. EPA’s Brownfields Program has a rich history rooted in environmental justice and is committed to helping communities revitalize brownfield properties, mitigate potential health risks, and restore economic vitality.

EPA expects that funding awarded will advance the Biden Administration’s [Justice40](#) priorities which promise to deliver at least 40 percent of the overall benefits from key federal investments to disadvantaged communities.¹

The EPA’s Brownfields Program is built upon four basic goals and principles – protecting the environment, partnering for success, stimulating the marketplace, and promoting sustainable reuse. EPA is committed to supporting research and technical assistance that will further the goals of the program and provide enhanced knowledge, tools, and processes to a broad range of

¹ Disadvantaged – Consideration of appropriate data, indices, and screening tools to determine whether a specific community is disadvantaged should be based on a combination of variables that may include, but are not limited to, the following: low income, high and/or persistent poverty; high unemployment and underemployment; racial and ethnic residential segregation, particularly where the segregation stems from discrimination by government entities; linguistic isolation; high housing cost burden and substandard housing; distressed neighborhoods; high transportation cost burden and/or low transportation access; disproportionate environmental stressor burden and high cumulative impacts; limited water and sanitation access and affordability; disproportionate impacts from climate change; high energy cost burden and low energy access; jobs lost through the energy transition; and access to healthcare. Office of Management and Budget’s Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative Memo (July 20, 2021). www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/M-21-28.pdf.

stakeholders (e.g., tribal, state, local and other non-governmental entities), especially to small, rural, and underserved communities.²

I.A. Project Description

The EPA's Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization (OBLR) is soliciting applications for funding under Section 104(k)(7) of CERCLA, which authorizes funding to eligible entities to provide training, research, and technical assistance to facilitate the inventory of brownfield sites, site assessments, remediation of brownfield sites, community involvement, or site preparation.

Grants awarded under this solicitation will help communities, organizations, government agencies, nonprofits, and individuals tackle the challenge of cleaning up and revitalizing brownfield properties. For purposes of this grant, the general definitions of research and technical assistance are provided below. These definitions provide guidance for the types of activities the EPA is interested in supporting.

1. **Research (as defined at 2 CFR 200.1).** A systematic study directed toward fuller scientific knowledge or understanding of the subject studied that may include both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The term research also includes activities involving the training of individuals in research techniques where such activities utilize the same facilities as other research and development activities and where such activities are not included in the instruction function.
2. **Technical Assistance** The term "technical assistance" refers to the delivery of direct ongoing advice and support, in the form of specialized knowledge, to a person(s) or organization(s) with the goal of guiding them through a particular process or helping them understand complex brownfields-related subject matter.

The EPA anticipates awarding approximately one grant in each of the five topic areas below:

1. Nation-wide technical assistance for Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) grant recipients (RLF TA)
2. Nation-wide technical assistance to nonprofits seeking to reuse brownfields sites (Nonprofits TA)

² When EPA uses the term "underserved communities" it has the meaning defined in Executive Order 13985: *Advancing Racial Equity And Support For Underserved Communities Through The Federal Government*, which defines "underserved communities" as "populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life....". As described in the Executive Order, "underserved communities" include communities such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality. It also includes "communities environmentally overburdened," that is, a community adversely and disproportionately affected by environmental and human health harms or risks, and "disadvantaged, communities" as referenced in Executive Order 14008, *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad*, and defined in Office of Management and Budget's Memo M-21-28: Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative.

3. Nation-wide technical assistance to local government leaders on developing and/or operating brownfields programs within their jurisdictions (Local Government TA)
4. Research, technical assistance, and related outreach on minimizing displacement resulting from brownfields assessment, cleanup and reuse (Anti-displacement research)
5. Research, technical assistance, and related outreach on land banking approaches for brownfields revitalization (Land banks research)

Note to Applicants: Applicants wishing to apply for multiple topic areas must submit a **separate** application for each topic area they plan to support.

I.B. Description of Subject Areas

Topic 1: Nation-wide Technical Assistance for Brownfields RLF programs (Funding up to \$1,000,000 with a 5 year period of performance)

EPA is soliciting applications from eligible entities to provide technical assistance to prospective and existing RLF Cooperative Agreement Recipients (CARs).

Cooperative Agreement Goal: The cooperative agreement awarded under this topic is intended to 1) help communities that have not previously engaged in brownfields projects to gain an understanding of requirements for managing a successful RLF program, and 2) build capacity for existing RLF CARs, so that they can better manage their RLF programs when the grant is open and in post-closeout (i.e., operating under a Closeout Agreement).

Who Will Be Served: The successful applicant should target support to both prospective and existing RLF CARs. Special emphasis should be on building capacity among communities that are underserved, rural, small, and/or experiencing environmental justice challenges.

Cooperative Agreement Activities: Capacity building activities should include conducting outreach, developing relevant informational materials, encouraging peer networking, and providing technical assistance directly to prospective and existing CARs:

- a. *Outreach efforts* should target existing RLF CARs and various types of communities that may not know about or understand how to address brownfields in their communities. Outreach should include training and sharing of informational materials, best practices, lessons learned, goal setting, identifying various financial public and private resources to consider, partnership building, preparation to attract appropriate developers, and encouraging engagement in direct technical assistance projects;
- b. *Relevant informational materials* such as digestible, user-friendly, creative, and highly visual guidance and sample documents in varying formats (e.g., infographics, videos, podcasts, recorded webinars, and “ask the expert” sessions) that among other topics, discuss the use of latest communication technology to reach desired audiences and website improvements for CARs to attract businesses, developers, or other interested audiences. These materials may be

a product of technical assistance engagements or may be developed to assist in delivering technical assistance. The successful applicant should make informational materials and results of technical assistance engagements available online in an easily searchable library of resources for entities wanting to learn about RLF grants and how to successfully execute an RLF program;

- c. *Peer networking* should be designed to connect CARs with extensive RLF experience to less experienced RLF CARs. This may include but is not limited to: opportunities such as a community of practice, annual meetings for those interested in brownfields RLFs, outreach workshops for prospective brownfields RLF grant applicants, listservs and creation of a resource toolbox.
- d. *Direct technical assistance* should be available to prospective and existing RLF CARs nationwide, including tribes and US territories. Applicants should explain their approach for delivering technical assistance with varying depths of involvement and timeframes (e.g., ranging from providing technical assistance over the phone using pre-prepared materials available online to intensive one-on-one engagements that result in a site visit and specific deliverable).

EPA anticipates that a portion of this technical assistance will be delivered during in-person events, such as site visits, mentorship visits, workshops, trainings, conferences, etc. Travel and other forms of participant support costs that will enable program beneficiaries to participate in these events are allowable costs. EPA anticipates participant support costs will be limited to prospective (rather than existing) RLF grant recipients.³

Specifically, the successful RLF TA applicant may, for example, conduct the following activities: to:

- Provide free technical assistance when prospective and existing CARs have questions on items such as the following:
 - PRIMARY FOCUS AREA 1: Marketing strategies
 - PRIMARY FOCUS AREA 2: Financial management (e.g., discounted loans, loan loss guarantee, proper collateral, types of loan strategies depending on the market)
 - ADDITIONAL FOCUS AREAS:
 - Supplemental Funding process and how to prepare pipeline projects to secure supplemental funding
 - Explanation of the cleanup process and what a CAR's role is (e.g., how to coordinate with a State VCP or other regulatory agency to get cleanup documents ready)
 - Loan and Subgrant Agreements
 - Differences between what funds can be used for under a cooperative agreement versus a closeout agreement and how to keep the program going in post-closeout
 - Federal cross-cutter requirements

³ Refer to [EPA Guidance on Participant Support Costs](#) for additional information on allowable participant support costs.

- Site eligibility
- Subgrantee/borrower eligibility
- ACRES reporting specific to RLFs (e.g., loans, subgrants, program income, post-closeout)
- Assisting new RLF CARs with getting started (e.g., short-term, mid-term, and long-term steps)
- Provide training through recorded webinars and meetings on topics above or others that applicants deem important or that existing CARs request, including:
 - Prepare slides on tips for managing an RLF Program (make some training specific to prospective CARs)
 - Have successful CARs present examples, particularly of how they have dealt with challenges
 - Create opportunities for RLF CARs to network and exchange ideas through peer-to-peer/community of practice
 - Facilitate an annual meeting to encourage peer-to-peer networking and provide training to RLF CARs
 - Convene/facilitate meetings between the local community, developers, lenders, and others involved in the cleanup and reuse of brownfield properties, with a particular focus on engaging experts in financial management and marketing of RLFs.
- Prepare fact sheets, templates, or other documents (e.g., quarterly newsletters) that will be helpful to existing and/or prospective RLF CARs and create an accessible resource and information toolbox. For example, fact sheets and documents for each state Voluntary Cleanup Program and related programs that address underground storage tanks, above ground storage tanks, lead, and asbestos to facilitate an understanding of the cleanup programs, standards, enrollment fees, and processes/documents. Also develop outreach materials summarizing state program contact information

All informational materials, outreach, and technical assistance should incorporate and promote principles of health, sustainability, equity, environmental justice, and minimize displacement from brownfields redevelopment and reuse. Guidance materials, outreach and direct technical assistance should also include a range of topics, including for example:

- How to identify and safely reuse brownfields using RLF resources,
- How a community new to brownfields can start an RLF program,
- Common challenges and solutions for RLF programs,
- How to collaborate with state or local government, and site owners,
- How to make a case for brownfields redevelopment or reuse,
- Promoting site reuse alternatives to meet community needs,
- Defenses to CERCLA liability (recipients will not make these determinations on EPA's behalf),
- EPA brownfields funding and eligibility requirements of borrowers and subgrantees (recipients will not make these determinations on EPA's behalf),
- Potential sources of additional funding for brownfields projects,
- How to develop a strategy and criteria for issuing subgrants and discounted loans while maintaining the 50/50 RLF split rule [i.e., at least 50% of the total award amount (EPA

funds plus the associated cost share) must be used to provide loans for the cleanup of eligible brownfield sites and for associated eligible programmatic costs],

- How to incorporate real estate financing principles and approaches, including loan underwriting, loan servicing, and credit analysis,
- How to consider and integrate flexible RLF loan products (e.g., developing options for reasonable interest rate structure and length of repayment terms that will fill different financial gaps while ensuring the RLF remains viable),
- How to develop an RLF outreach strategy to reach appropriate stakeholders such as potential borrowers and subgrantees, including:
 - How to spur and maintain long-term involvement of local leaders and residents,
 - How to build community trust,
 - How to attract and engage with developers, and
- Other topics of shared interest for prospective and existing RLF CARs as determined by the applicant.

The successful applicant should communicate with EPA Regional Brownfields Programs and other EPA Brownfields Technical Assistance Providers to coordinate relevant activities. For example the successful applicant should review existing materials from EPA providers to avoid duplication, train other EPA Brownfields Technical Assistance Providers on specific tools or RLF capacity building approaches, refer program participants to other EPA Technical Assistance Providers (e.g., Technical Assistance for Brownfields, Environmental Finance Centers, Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers) as applicable, and/or lead an activity at a workshop organized by regional, state or other EPA Technical Assistance Providers to increase the visibility and understanding of brownfields RLFs.

Topic 2: Technical Assistance to Nonprofits Seeking to Reuse Brownfields (Funding up to \$1,000,000 with a 5 year period of performance)

EPA is soliciting applications from eligible entities to provide technical assistance to nonprofits⁴ that seek to assess, clean up, redevelop, and/or reuse a brownfield site(s).

Cooperative Agreement Goal: The cooperative agreement awarded under this topic is intended to help nonprofits develop expertise and experience to lead brownfield revitalization projects in local communities. This includes building brownfields leadership capacity amongst nonprofits that are mission-focused (e.g., faith-based or those focused on health, affordable housing, small business support, land conservation, the arts, history, sports, recreation, etc.) and nonprofit community development organizations. Nonprofit capacity building may result in:

- Stronger community engagement in brownfield issues and opportunities.
- Leadership, key partnership, and decision-making roles in brownfields revitalization projects.

⁴ The term *Nonprofit organization* is defined at 2 CFR 200.1.

- Advancing the safe reuse of one or more brownfield sites.
- Integration of community-driven brownfield revitalization into their mission.

Who Will Be Served: The successful applicant should target their support to nonprofit organizations with service areas affected by brownfield sites. Special emphasis should be on nonprofits that serve residents from underserved, rural, or small communities as well as from communities experiencing environmental justice and climate challenges exacerbated by brownfield disinvestment.

Cooperative Agreement Activities: Capacity building activities should include conducting outreach, developing relevant informational materials, encouraging peer networking and providing technical assistance directly to nonprofits:

- Outreach efforts* should be customized to target the various types of nonprofit organizations that may become involved with brownfield reuse. Messaging should address how brownfield site assessment, cleanup and reuse can help nonprofit organizations achieve their mission and better serve their communities. Outreach activities should focus on sharing informational materials, best practices, lessons learned from peer-to-peer networking, and engagement in direct technical assistance projects conducted under this grant.
- Relevant informational materials* such as user-friendly, creative, and highly visual guidance in varying formats (e.g., infographics, videos, podcasts, webinars, and “ask the expert” sessions). These materials may be a product of technical assistance engagements or may be developed to assist in delivering technical assistance. The successful applicant should make informational materials and results of technical assistance engagements available online and easily accessible by nonprofits seeking to reuse brownfields.
- Peer networking* should be designed to connect nonprofits with and without brownfields project experience, as well as connecting local nonprofits to national or regional nonprofit organizations that have relevant brownfields expertise. This may include but is not limited to: opportunities to advance a national community of practice, annual meetings for nonprofits interested in brownfields reuse, brownfields mentoring or coaching sessions, regional discussions on brownfields and nonprofits, outreach workshops for prospective nonprofit brownfields grant applicants, and listservs.
- Direct technical assistance* should be available to nonprofits nationwide, including tribes and US territories. Applicants should explain their approach for delivering technical assistance with varying depths of involvement and timeframes (e.g., ranging from providing technical assistance over the phone using pre-prepared materials available online to intensive one-on-one engagements that result in a site visit and specific deliverable).

EPA anticipates that a portion of this technical assistance will be delivered during in-person events, such as site visits, mentorship visits, workshops, trainings, conferences, etc. Travel and

other participant support costs for program beneficiaries will enable nonprofit organizations and related participants to conduct and receive technical assistance via these events.

All research, guides, outreach, and technical assistance should incorporate and promote health, sustainability, equity, environmental justice, resiliency, and anti-displacement principles for brownfields redevelopment and reuse. Materials, outreach, and direct technical assistance should include a range of topics, including for example:

- How a nonprofit new to brownfields can become familiar with brownfields and the contaminated property redevelopment process,
- How a nonprofit can determine whether, or what aspect of, brownfields reuse is a good fit for its existing mission or work,
- How a nonprofit can sustain efforts to support brownfields reuse,
- What strengths a nonprofit can bring to brownfield redevelopment (e.g., how a nonprofit's specific strengths related to community engagement expertise, local trust, an emphasis on anti-displacement, etc. can make it a strong and effective partner with another entity that may oversee the brownfield redevelopment or reuse),
- Nonprofit versus local government roles in brownfields reuse,
- Potential strategies and liability protections for nonprofits who wish to acquire, own, or lease a brownfield site,
- How to competitively procure needed expertise (environmental, historic, financial, etc.) in compliance with 2 CFR Parts 200 and 1500 as well as 40 CFR Part 33 and navigate federal funding requirements, (recipients will not make these determinations on EPA's behalf),
- Common challenges and solutions for nonprofits working on brownfields projects,
- How to collaborate with state or local government and site owners,
- Communicating site risks and promoting site reuse alternatives to meet community needs,
- Potential sources of brownfields project funding for nonprofits,
- Aligning nonprofit planning (community organizing, capital campaigns, etc.) with brownfield timelines,
- How to spur and maintain long-term community involvement of local leaders and residents,
- How to leverage additional funding from public or for-profit entities; and
- Other topics of shared interest to nonprofits interested in brownfields reuse that the applicant considers important.

The successful applicant should communicate with other EPA Brownfields Technical Assistance Providers to coordinate relevant activities. For example, the successful applicant may review existing materials from EPA providers to avoid duplication, train other EPA Technical Assistance Providers on specific tools or nonprofit capacity building approaches, refer clients to other EPA Technical Assistance Providers as applicable, and/or lead an activity at a workshop organized by EPA regional, state or other EPA Technical Assistance Providers (e.g. Technical Assistance for Brownfields, Environmental Finance Centers, Environmental Justice Thriving

Communities Technical Assistance Centers) to increase the visibility and understanding of brownfields among nonprofit organizations.

Topic 3: Nation-wide Technical Assistance to Local Government Leaders on Developing and/or Operating Brownfields Programs Within their Jurisdictions (Funding up to \$1,000,000 with a 5 year period of performance)

EPA is soliciting applications from eligible entities to provide brownfields revitalization technical assistance to elected and appointed local government leaders and staff, that are new or inexperienced in brownfield cleanup and reuse.

Cooperative Agreement Goal: The cooperative agreement awarded under this topic is intended to build capacity amongst elected and appointed local government officials and staff by educating them on how brownfields cleanup and reinvestment can help their community, and the resources available to support this work. Capacity building will include engagement with leaders and staff who have brownfields experience, introducing the breadth of stakeholders and subject matter experts who are necessary partners in brownfields redevelopment, as well as demonstrating how local leadership is critical throughout the brownfields reuse process.

Who Will Be Served: The successful applicant should target support to government leaders, such as mayors, city managers, city or town council members, county commissioners, regional planning representatives, leadership, and staff with no or limited brownfields experience. Special emphasis should be on efficient ways to build capacity among local government leaders and staff who serve communities that are underserved, rural, small, or experiencing environmental and climate justice challenges.⁵

Cooperative Agreement Activities: Capacity building activities should include conducting outreach, developing relevant informational materials, encouraging peer networking, and providing technical assistance directly to local government leaders:

- a. *Outreach efforts* should be highly professional and targeted specifically to local government leaders, especially elected and appointed officials and staff who may not know about or understand how to address brownfields in their communities. Outreach should reflect how brownfields resources can help their community in the near- and long-term. Outreach should include sharing informational materials, best practices, lessons learned, and encourage engagement.

⁵ There is no federal definition of what is considered a “small” population, so it is up to the applicant to provide their own definition of small community. However, the Brownfields Program considers communities of 10K and less as “micro” communities, 20K and less = “small”, 50K and less = rural, less than 100K = nonurban. See [FY 23 Assessment and Multipurpose Grant Outreach Webinar Q&A](#) on page 7 for more information.

- b. *Relevant informational materials* should be creative, engaging, succinct, user-friendly, and highly visual. Materials should be presented in varying formats (e.g., infographics, fact sheets, videos, podcasts, webinars, brownfields how-to guides, “ask the expert” sessions) and appropriate to an audience of officials and staff. These materials may be a product of technical assistance engagements or may be developed to assist in delivering technical assistance. The successful applicant should make informational materials and results of technical assistance engagements available online in an easily searchable library of resources for local government leaders seeking to reuse brownfields.
- c. *Peer networking* should be designed to connect local government leaders with limited or no brownfields experiences to current or former local government leaders with brownfields reuse expertise. This may include identifying experts such as current or former mayors, city councilors, city managers, county commissioners, staff, etc. with a range of brownfields assessment, cleanup, and reuse experience to facilitate mentorship. Peer networking opportunities should be available in various formats (e.g., in-person, small group discussions, via webinars, etc.).
- d. *Direct technical assistance* should be available to local government leaders and staff nationwide, including US territories. Applicants should explain their approach for delivering technical assistance with varying depths of involvement and timeframes (e.g., ranging from providing technical assistance remotely using pre-prepared materials available online to intensive one-on-one engagements that result in a site visit and specific deliverables).

EPA anticipates that a significant portion of this technical assistance will be delivered during in-person events, such as site visits, mentorship visits, workshops, trainings, conferences, etc. Travel and other forms of participant support costs will enable local government leaders, including elected and appointed officials and staff, to participate in these events are allowable costs. As such, up to 30% of the cooperative agreement budget can support travel and other participant support costs.

All informational materials, outreach, engagements, and technical assistance should be highly professional, succinct, and promote principles of health, sustainability, equity, climate resilience, environmental justice, and minimizing displacement of current community members. Materials, outreach and direct technical assistance should include a range of topics, including but not limited to:

- General information about what elected officials need to know about brownfields (e.g., concise information on the definition of a brownfields, where they are located, how they affect community members, who can help, regulatory oversight, common challenges and solutions for local governments when addressing brownfields, municipal economic benefits of brownfields redevelopment, broad scope of brownfields reuse, etc.);
- Coaching activities to explain why local government leadership is needed to move brownfields into reuse and the various roles of government support;

- Site control strategies for jurisdictions to acquire, own or lease a brownfield site without acquiring liability; value of site control and how to direct the redevelopment process;
- Costs of brownfield redevelopment and costs (social, economic, environmental) associated with allowing brownfield properties to go unaddressed;
- Benefits (near- and long-term) of brownfields redevelopment;
- Valuing and supporting robust community engagement, local partnerships, and site reuse planning;
- Contaminated property redevelopment process: typical timeframes, navigating risks and liabilities, how to spur and maintain long-term involvement of local leaders and residents, grant funding cycles and periods of performance, role of the market, roles of local government and other partners in brownfields reuse, collaborating with state and federal governments and site owners, financing brownfields, how to attract and engage with developers, how to build a funding/financing package, etc.;
- How elected officials and staff can connect local brownfield projects to job training programs and employment opportunities;
- Incorporating equitable development and climate-informed approaches into brownfields reuse;
- Resources/incentives for brownfield reuse from state and federal governments, foundations, nonprofits, etc.;
- Other topics of shared interest to government leaders interested in brownfields reuse as determined by the applicant.

The successful applicant should communicate with EPA Regional Brownfields Programs and other EPA Brownfields Technical Assistance Providers to coordinate relevant activities. For example, the successful applicant may review existing materials from EPA technical assistance providers to avoid duplication, train other EPA Brownfields Technical Assistance Providers on specific tools or local government leader capacity building approaches, refer clients to other EPA Technical Assistance Providers (e.g. Technical Assistance for Brownfields, Environmental Finance Centers, Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers) as applicable, and/or lead an activity at a workshop organized by EPA regional, state or other EPA Technical Assistance Providers to increase the visibility and understanding of brownfields among elected officials and staff.

Topic 4: Research, Technical Assistance, and Related Outreach on Minimizing Displacement Resulting from Brownfields Assessment, Cleanup and Reuse (Funding up to \$500,000 with a 4 year period of performance)

EPA is soliciting applications from eligible entities to research and share research reports on specific strategies that will help communities minimize displacement resulting from brownfields reuse EPA’s Brownfields Program funding is often early money into a brownfield assessment, cleanup, and reuse t project. That initial investment can spark additional changes within the

community, which may lead to gentrification and displacement of current residents, businesses, and culture.

Cooperative Agreement Goal: The cooperative agreement awarded under this topic is intended to help communities build practical knowledge, prepare for and direct the changes sparked by brownfields assessment and cleanup activities to minimize displacement, maximize benefits to existing or indigenous community members, and provide other environmental and public health benefits to the existing community. The successful applicant will share with brownfield communities the practical approaches, best practices, lessons learned, and models resulting from its research.

Who Will Be Served: The successful applicant should target its research and technical assistance support to community leaders (governmental and nongovernmental), residents and other stakeholders who want to put in place local strategies and policies that will ensure brownfields assessments, cleanups and subsequent reuse benefits the existing community, prevents displacement, preserves culture and increases access to opportunities.

Cooperative Agreement Activities: Practical approaches to help communities ensure brownfields redevelopment benefits existing communities without displacement include conducting research; developing guides and roadmaps on best practices, lessons learned, effective strategies and model approaches; promoting awareness of informational materials; and providing direct technical assistance to recipients of EPA brownfield resources to test and refine usability of the materials developed. This includes for example:

- a. *Research* to identify specific strategies, models, approaches, and policies that are effective at maximizing lasting benefits to existing communities, minimizing gentrification and the displacement of current residents, businesses, and culture, and investing in resident workforce development. This research should consider how and when to implement these strategies and policies at local/regional/state levels. This may involve researching academic sources and identifying and interviewing communities and organizations combatting gentrification, particularly those that are or have been engaged in brownfields reuse.
- b. *Collaboration* with existing leaders with practical expertise in minimizing gentrification and displacement, including universities, nonprofits, foundations, government agencies, and community members with lived experience.
- c. *Multiple guides and roadmaps* that share research findings and information on effective strategies and policies, best practices for successful implementation, issues and solutions, and case study examples for preventing displacement, minimizing gentrification, and maximizing benefits to the existing community alongside brownfields reuse. Written, audio and video guides should be prepared in plain language and be highly visual, easily digestible, and user-friendly. The guides should include step-by-step information for

implementing each strategy or policy, identifying [what stage\(s\) of the brownfields reuse process](#) each can be implemented to be most effective. Roadmaps should help communities determine which strategy(ies) and policy(ies) are right for them, how to get started, and how to engage community members and other stakeholders.

- d. *Up to 30% of the cooperative agreement budget can support direct technical assistance to EPA brownfield grant recipients and subrecipients, and Targeted Brownfields Assessment recipients*⁶. In addition to sharing best practices/practical approaches/lessons learned/model approaches, the recipient should offer technical assistance directly to EPA brownfields grant or targeted brownfields assessment (TBA) recipients. Technical assistance should result in a roadmap of potential strategies that will help the communities identify potential unintended consequences of their brownfield investments and select locally-appropriate strategies. Technical assistance should also result in the testing and refinement of materials for stakeholder use. Applicants should explain their approach for delivering direct technical assistance to coach and test the strategies, approaches and policies promoted in their guides and outreach materials. Special emphasis should be on supporting communities that are underserved, rural, small, or experiencing environmental justice and climate challenges.
- e. *Outreach* should be customized and targeted to different groups, such as urban, nonurban, and rural communities that may or may not have access to EPA's brownfields financial assistance. Outreach should include plain language training on the guides and roadmaps, practical approaches, best practices, lessons learned, and direct technical assistance projects.

All research, collaboration, guides, technical assistance, and outreach should incorporate and promote health, sustainability, equity, environmental justice, and resiliency principles for brownfields redevelopment and reuse. Research, materials, outreach, and direct technical assistance should include a range of topics, including for example:

- Understanding the various types of gentrification and their effects on a community (e.g., cultural, expansive, concentrated, economic, climate, etc.);
- Understanding which indicators a community may consider when analyzing gentrification such as changes in income, taxes, demographics, educational attainment, disaster vulnerability, etc., and how to analyze and utilize that data;
- Understanding discrepancies between data and the experiences/values of long-term residents;

⁶ EPA's Targeted Brownfields Assessment (TBA) program helps states, tribes, and municipalities minimize the uncertainties of contamination often associated with brownfield sites. This program supplements other efforts under the Brownfields Program to promote the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfield sites. TBAs are conducted by an EPA contractor on behalf of an eligible entity. Services include site assessments, cleanup options and cost estimates, and community outreach. For more information on the TBA program, visit [EPA's Targeted Brownfields Assessments \(TBA\)](#) website.

- How brownfields planning and site reuse can be a tool to empower and benefit the existing community and minimize gentrification and displacement;
- How an existing community (e.g., local residents, small business owners, community-based organizations) can start to consider and incorporate anti-displacement strategies alongside brownfields planning and reuse;
- Common challenges and solutions for implementing strategies and policies for minimizing displacement and maximizing the benefits of brownfields reuse for the existing community (e.g., affordable housing, preservation of existing residential neighborhoods, workforce development, small business enterprise and economic development, and promoting and preserving arts and culture);
- The roles of state or local government, community-based organizations, residents, and developers and how these groups can effectively collaborate in their efforts to minimize displacement,
- The role of community engagement, including effective approaches, in identifying issues and strategies to ensure equitable use of resources available for brownfields assessment, cleanup and subsequent reuse.;
- How to develop and implement an outreach strategy to reach appropriate stakeholders such as residents and business owners;
- How to spur and maintain long-term involvement of local leaders and residents; and
- Other topics of interest related to displacement and brownfields reuse as determined by the applicant.

The successful applicant will communicate with EPA Regional Brownfields Programs and other EPA Brownfields Technical Assistance Providers to coordinate relevant activities. review existing materials from EPA providers to avoid duplication, train other EPA Brownfields Technical Assistance Providers on how to implement specific anti-displacement strategies or policies, refer program participants to other EPA Brownfields Technical Assistance Providers (e.g. Technical Assistance for Brownfields, Environmental Finance Centers, Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers) as applicable, and/or lead an activity at a workshop organized by EPA regional, state or other EPA Technical Assistance Providers to increase the visibility and understanding of anti-displacement strategies and policies to implement alongside brownfields reuse.

Topic 5: Research, Technical Assistance and Related Outreach on Land Banking Approaches for Brownfields Revitalization (Funding up to \$500,000 with a 4 year period of performance)

EPA is soliciting applications from eligible entities to conduct research on how land banks can support brownfields revitalization. Land banks typically accept, manage, and reposition vacant, foreclosed, and blighted properties. However, land banks range in their operations and business models, based on state or other authorities.

Cooperative Agreement Goal: The cooperative agreement awarded under this topic is intended to introduce communities to various brownfields and land banking approaches and expand community use of land banks as a tool for brownfields revitalization. The successful applicant will share with brownfield communities the practical approaches, best practices, lessons learned, and models resulting from their research.

Who Will Be Served: The successful applicant should target its research and technical support to states, local communities, and tribes who have or may be interested in establishing a land bank to help with brownfield revitalization.

Cooperative Agreement Activities: Research, technical assistance, and outreach activities on land banking approaches for brownfields revitalization should include conducting research, developing guides on best practices, lessons learned, effective strategies and model approaches, promoting awareness of informational materials, and providing direct technical assistance, including for example:

1. *Research* to identify specific land banks that address brownfield sites, those that do not, and why. The research should examine different types of land banks, their authorities, considerations of brownfield sites and business models, including site acquisition, liability protection, clearing title, community engagement, reuse planning, paying for assessment and remediation, site repositioning, and property sale/lease. This may involve researching state or local enabling legislation, specific liability and financial concerns, and other barriers encountered. The research should also examine how communities can create a land bank with a focus on safely and equitably reusing brownfield sites.
2. *Multiple guides* to share research findings and information on case study examples of how land banks can support brownfields reuse, including effective strategies and policies, best practices for successful implementation, stumbling blocks encountered, and solutions. Written and audio/video guides should be prepared in plain language, visual, easily digestible and user-friendly, and provide step-by-step information for implementing each strategy. Additional considerations should include helping communities determine which strategies are right for them, how to get started, and how to engage community members and other stakeholders.
3. *Up to 30% of the cooperative agreement budget can support direct technical assistance to EPA brownfield grant recipients and subrecipients, and Targeted Brownfields Assessment (TBA) recipients.* In addition to sharing best practices/practical approaches/lessons learned/model approaches, the recipient should offer technical assistance directly to EPA brownfields grant or TBA recipients. Technical assistance includes coaching communities on various land banking approaches to support brownfields revitalization. The purpose of the coaching is to test the effectiveness of guides and outreach materials developed and refine materials as needed for stakeholder use. Applicants should explain their approach for delivering direct technical assistance to

coach and test the strategies and approaches promoted in their guides and outreach materials. Special emphasis should be on supporting communities that are underserved, rural, small, or experiencing environmental justice and climate challenges.

4. *Outreach* should be customized and targeted to different groups, such as urban, nonurban, and rural communities that may or may not have access to EPA's brownfields financial assistance. Outreach should include plain language training on the guides, practical approaches, best practices, lessons learned, and direct technical assistance projects.

All research, guides, technical assistance, and outreach should incorporate and promote health, sustainability, equity, environmental justice, resiliency, and anti-displacement principles for brownfields redevelopment and reuse. Research, direct technical assistance and related outreach may include for example:

- Fundamentals of brownfields land banking, such as:
 - Types of land banks (residential, brownfields, commercial/industrial properties; land banks that can select properties versus those that must accept properties),
 - Role of land bank as a facilitator to help a site become an asset to the community,
 - Various land bank approaches and enabling legislation,
 - Community engagement and site reuse planning.
- Different types of entities that manage brownfields land banks, such as:
 - Community-based organizations (e.g., community development corporations),
 - Local governments, and
 - Regional entities,with consideration of how each entity is subject to different land use priorities, timelines, and legal and funding structures.
- Challenges of land banking when addressing brownfields, e.g.,
 - Business planning,
 - Operations – identifying sustained funding streams, staff and partners needed, establishing a board of directors and a process/strategy for how to communicate and coordinate with other governmental agencies
- Land bank acquisition strategies, e.g.,
 - Site selection criteria,
 - Community engagement,
 - Liability concerns for accepting, holding, managing, and disposing of property,
 - Property access,
 - Coordinating with legal authorities to obtain title
- Land bank reposition and disposal strategies; including different ways a land bank can
 - Work with the community to support brownfields site reuse,
 - Build community trust,
 - Engage with the investment or developer community
- Other topics of interest related to land banks and brownfields reuse

The recipient will communicate with EPA Regional Brownfields Programs and other EPA Brownfields Technical Assistance Providers to coordinate relevant activities. review existing materials from EPA technical assistance providers to avoid duplication, train other EPA Technical Assistance Providers (Technical Assistance for Brownfields, Environmental Finance Centers, Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers) on brownfields and land banking research findings, and/or lead an activity at a workshop organized by EPA regional, state or other EPA Brownfields Technical Assistance Providers. These coordination activities will be designed to increase visibility and understanding of land banking as a brownfields revitalization tool

I.C. Uses of Grant Funds

Eligible uses of grant funds include direct costs necessary to provide brownfields research and technical assistance identified in the approved workplan. This includes eligible programmatic costs necessary to perform the project, such as: costs for personnel, technical experts, materials, supplies, room rentals, travel, and transportation expenses for recipient personnel and program beneficiaries.

Funds cannot be used for the payment of:

1. Conducting site assessments or actual cleanups;
2. Construction and land acquisition;
3. Foreign travel;
4. Direct costs for Federal, state or private grant application preparation with the exception of incidental use of data or guidance materials by grant applicants;
5. Writing or reviewing grant applications;
6. A penalty or fine;
7. A federal cost share requirement (for example, a cost share required by other federal funds);
8. Administrative costs, including all indirect costs and direct costs for cooperative agreement administration, in excess of five (5) percent of the total amount of EPA cooperative agreement funding, with the exception of financial and performance reporting costs (which are considered allowable programmatic costs and not subject to the 5% limitation);
9. A cost of compliance with any federal law, excluding the cost of compliance with laws applicable to environmental cleanup; or
10. Unallowable costs (e.g., lobbying) under 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E.

Administrative Costs. Under CERCLA § 104(k)(5)(B), cooperative agreement recipients (CARs) and subrecipients may use up to 5% of the amount of federal funding for this cooperative agreement for administrative costs, including indirect costs under 2 CFR § 200.414. As required by 2 CFR § 200.403(d), the CAR and subrecipients must classify administrative costs as direct or indirect consistently and may not classify the same types of cost in both categories. Eligible cooperative agreement and subaward administrative costs subject to the 5% limitation include direct costs for:

- a. Costs incurred to comply with the following provisions of the *Uniform Administrative Requirements for Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* at 2 CFR Parts 200 and 1500 other than those identified as programmatic.
 - i. Preparing revisions and changes in the budgets, scopes of work, program plans, and other activities required under 2 CFR § 200.308;
 - ii. Maintaining and operating financial management systems required under 2 CFR § 200.302;
 - iii. Preparing payment requests and handling payments under 2 CFR § 200.305;
 - iv. Financial reporting under 2 CFR § 200.327;
 - v. Non-federal audits required under 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F; and
- b. Closeout under 2 CFR § 200.343 with the exception of preparing the recipient's final performance report. Costs for preparing this report are programmatic and are not subject to the 5% limitation on direct administrative costs.

I.D. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage

The activities to be funded under this announcement support the [EPA's FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan](#).⁷ Awards made under this announcement will support Goal 6 - Safeguard and Revitalize Communities, Objective 6.1 - Clean Up and Restore Land for Productive Uses and Healthy Communities of the [EPA's Strategic Plan](#). All applications must be for projects that support this goal and objective.

I.E. Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outputs/Outcomes

EPA requires that applicants adequately describe environmental outputs (performance measures) and outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements.⁸ Applicants must include specific statements describing the environmental results of the proposed project in terms of well-defined outputs and, to the maximum extent practicable, well-defined outcomes that will demonstrate how the project will contribute to the Agency's strategic plan goal and objective described above in [Section I.D.](#)

Applicants are required to describe, in their responses to the ranking criteria in [Section IV.E.](#), how funding will help EPA achieve environmental outputs and outcomes. Outputs and outcomes specific to each project will be identified as deliverables in the negotiated workplan if the application is selected for award. Recipients will be expected to report progress toward the attainment of expected project outputs and outcomes during the project performance period. Outputs and outcomes are defined as follows:

1. Outputs

⁷ EPA's Strategic Plan is available at <https://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan>.

⁸ EPA Order 5700.7, EPA's Policy for Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements is available at www.epa.gov/grants/epa-order-57007a1-epas-policy-environmental-results-under-epa-assistance-agreements.

The term “outputs” refers to an environmental activity, effort and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal or objective that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during the project period. The expected outputs for the grants awarded under these guidelines may include but are not limited to:

- a. targeted outreach and peer networking opportunities to reach a wide variety of brownfield stakeholders;
- b. development of topic-specific information and materials to support communities facing challenges from brownfield sites;
- c. training and direct technical assistance delivered to community members and other program beneficiaries; and
- d. research results and dissemination through reports and other written materials.

2. Outcomes

The term “outcomes” refers to the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out the activities under the grant. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic; must be qualitative or quantitative, and may not necessarily be achievable during the project period. EPA anticipates outcomes from cooperative agreements expected to be awarded under this announcement will include, but not be limited to, increasing the capacity of brownfields stakeholders to assess, cleanup, and safely reuse brownfields by:

- a. Managing a brownfields RLF program successfully over the long-term;
- b. Developing nonprofit expertise and experience to lead brownfield revitalization projects in local communities;
- c. Local leadership and engagement from elected officials and staff throughout the brownfields reuse process;
- d. Minimizing displacement and maximizing benefits to the existing community due to changes that may be sparked by brownfields reuse;
- e. Expanding community use of land banks as a tool for brownfields revitalization;
- f. Applying for brownfields grant opportunities as a result of receiving technical assistance;
- g. Improving community involvement, communication, and the development of partnerships among differing stakeholders; and
- h. Equipping brownfields stakeholders to effectively address, be involved in, and integrate environmental justice and equitable development principles into brownfields activities.

I.F. Supplementary Information

The statutory authorities for assistance agreements expected to be awarded by EPA under this announcement is CERCLA Section 104(k)(7). Appropriations for CERCLA Section 104(k)(7) were made available to EPA in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law-- Public Law 117-58

I.G. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation

Additional provisions that apply to Sections [III.](#), [IV.](#), [V.](#), and [VI.](#) of this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, can be found in [EPA’s Solicitation Clauses](#). These

provisions are important for applying to this solicitation and applicants must review them when preparing applications. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please contact the Regional Brownfields Contact listed in [Section VII.](#) to obtain the provisions.

SECTION II. – AWARD INFORMATION

II.A. What is the Amount of Available Funding?

The total estimated funding available under this competitive opportunity is \$4,000,000, subject to the availability of funds, quality of applications, and other applicable considerations. The EPA anticipates awarding five cooperative agreements. The maximum value of each grant will be based on the particular project but will not exceed \$1,000,000 over a five-year project period each for topics 1, 2, and 3 and will not exceed \$500,000 over a four-year project period for topics 4, and 5 under this competitive opportunity. Cooperative agreements awarded will be funded with Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (also known as the “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law”) funds.

EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this competition, consistent with EPA policy and guidance, if additional funding becomes available. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months from the date of original selection decisions. EPA reserves the right to not fund any applications under this competition or fund applications for some topics and not others. There is no guarantee that each topic will be funded.

II.B. How many Agreements will EPA Award in this Competition?

EPA anticipates selecting up to five (5) recipients, one for each topic described in [Section I.B.](#) of this announcement. If an entity applies for more than one topic, and is selected for award in multiple topics, EPA may combine those selections into one cooperative agreement award.

EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards under this announcement, make less awards than expected, not to make awards for each topic, or make multiple awards for a topic.

II.C. Will Applications be Partially Funded?

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund applications by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of proposed projects. To maintain the integrity of the competition and selection process, should EPA decide to partially fund an application, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the application, or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award.

II.D. What is the Project Period for Award(s) Resulting from this Solicitation?

For topics 1-3, the project period for these brownfields grants is five years. CARs are anticipated to have completed all deliverables under their award during the fifth year of their project and allow time for reporting accomplishments data and disseminating final reports as applicable.

For topics 4-5, the project period for these brownfields grants is four years. CARs are anticipated to have completed all deliverables under their award during the fourth year of their project to allow time for reporting accomplishments data and disseminating final reports as applicable.

II.E. Substantial Involvement

These brownfields grants will be awarded in the form of cooperative agreements. Cooperative agreements require the EPA Project Officer to be substantially involved in overseeing the work performed by the selected recipients. Although EPA will negotiate precise terms and conditions related to substantial involvement as part of the award process, the anticipated substantial federal involvement for this project may include, but is not limited to:

- Close monitoring of the recipient's performance to verify the results;
- Collaboration during the performance of the scope of work including participation in project activities, to the extent permissible under EPA policies. Examples of collaboration include:
 - Consultation between EPA staff and the recipients on effective methods of carrying out the scope of work provided the recipient makes the final decision on how to perform authorized activities.
 - Advice from EPA staff on how to access publicly available information on EPA or other federal agency websites.
 - With the consent of the recipient, EPA staff may provide technical advice to recipient contractors or subrecipients provided the recipient approves any expenditures of funds necessary to follow advice from EPA staff. The recipient remains accountable for performing contract and subaward management as specified in [2 CFR § 200.318](#) and [2 CFR § 200.332](#) as well as the terms of the EPA cooperative agreement.
 - EPA staff participation in meetings, webinars, and similar events upon the request of the recipient or in connection with a co-sponsorship agreement.
- In accordance with 2 CFR 200.325, as appropriate, review of proposed procurements.
- Review and approval of the substantive terms of procurement contracts and subawards (EPA will not select contractors or sub-recipients).
- Reviewing qualifications of key personnel. (EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the award recipient).
- Reviewing and commenting on reports prepared under the cooperative agreement. (The final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient.)
- Reviewing outputs and outcomes to ensure substantial progress is made in accordance with the cooperative agreement terms and conditions.

- Participation in periodic telephone conference calls to share ideas, project successes and challenges, etc., with EPA.

SECTION III. – APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY AND THRESHOLD CRITERIA

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#).

III.A. Who Can Apply?

The following information indicates which entities are eligible to apply for this cooperative agreement:

- General Purpose Unit of Local Government. [For purposes of the EPA Brownfields cooperative agreement Program, a “local government” is defined as stated under 2 CFR § 200.64.: Local government means a county, municipality, city, town, township, local public authority (including any public and Indian housing agency under the United States Housing Act of 1937), school district, special district, intrastate district, council of governments (whether or not incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under state law), any other regional or interstate government entity, or any agency or instrumentality of a local government.]
- Land Clearance Authority or another quasi-governmental entity that operates under the supervision and control of, or as an agent of, a general-purpose unit of local government.
- Government Entity Created by State Legislature.
- Regional Council or group of General-Purpose Units of Local Government.
- Redevelopment Agency that is chartered or otherwise sanctioned by a state.
- State.
- Indian tribe other than in Alaska. (The exclusion of Alaskan Tribes from Brownfields cooperative agreement eligibility is statutory at CERCLA § 104(k)(1)). Intertribal Consortia, comprised of eligible Indian tribes, are eligible for funding in accordance with EPA’s policy for funding intertribal consortia published in the Federal Register on November 4, 2002, at 67 Fed. Reg. 67181.)
- Alaska Native Regional Corporation, Alaska Native Village Corporation, and Metlakatla Indian Community. (Alaska Native Regional Corporations and Alaska Native Village Corporations are defined in the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 and following.)
- Nonprofit organization exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- Limited liability corporation in which all managing members are 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations or limited liability corporations whose sole members are 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations.
- Limited liability partnership in which all general partners are 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations or limited liability corporations whose sole members are 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations.
- Qualified community development entity as defined in Section 45D(c)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

- Other Nonprofit organizations. (For purposes of this cooperative agreement program, the term “nonprofit organization” means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization that is operated mainly for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purpose in the public interest; is not organized primarily for profit; and uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operation of the organization. The term includes nonprofit colleges, universities, and other educational institutions.)

Note, individuals, for-profit organizations, and nonprofit organizations exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that lobby are not eligible to receive Brownfields cooperative agreements.

III.B. Voluntary Cost Share/Leveraging

Matching funds are not required under this competition. Although cost-sharing or matching is not required as a condition of eligibility under this competition announcement, EPA will evaluate responses to the *Leveraging* criterion ([Section IV.E.](#)). Leveraging is when an applicant proposes to provide its own additional funds/resources or those from third party sources to support or complement the project awarded under the competition that are above and beyond the EPA cooperative agreement funds awarded. Any leveraged funds/resources, and their source, must be identified in the application. Leveraged funds and resources may take various forms as noted below.

Voluntary cost share is a form of leveraging. Voluntary cost sharing is when an applicant voluntarily proposes to legally commit to providing costs or contributions to support the project when a cost share is not required. Applicants who propose to use a voluntary cost share **must** include the costs or contributions for the voluntary cost share in the project budget on the SF-424. If an applicant proposes a voluntary cost share, the following apply:

- A voluntary cost share is subject to the match provisions in the cooperative agreement regulations (2 CFR § 200.306, as applicable).
- A voluntary cost share may only be met with eligible and allowable costs.
- The recipient may not use other sources of federal funds to meet a voluntary cost share unless the statute authorizing the other federal funding provides that the federal funds may be used to meet a cost share requirement on a federal cooperative agreement.
- The recipient is legally obligated to meet any proposed voluntary cost share that is included in the approved project budget. If the proposed voluntary cost share does not materialize during cooperative agreement performance, then EPA may reconsider the legitimacy of the award and/or take other appropriate action as authorized by 2 CFR § 200.338.

Other leveraged funding/resources that are not identified as a voluntary cost share -this form of leveraging may be met by obtaining and dedicating funding from another federal cooperative agreement, from an applicant's own resources, or resources from other third-party sources. This form of leveraging should not be included in the budget and the costs need not be eligible and allowable project costs under the EPA assistance agreement. While this form of leveraging should not be included in the budget, the cooperative agreement workplan should include a statement indicating that the applicant is expected to produce the proposed leveraging

consistent with the terms of the announcement and the applicant's application. If applicants propose to provide this form of leveraging, EPA expects them to make the effort to secure the leveraged resources described in their applications. If the proposed leveraging does not materialize during cooperative agreement performance, then EPA may reconsider the legitimacy of the award and/or take other appropriate action as authorized by 2 CFR Parts 200 and 1500 as applicable.

III.C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria

This section contains the threshold eligibility criteria that ensure applicants are eligible to receive a cooperative agreement under this competition. Threshold criteria are evaluated on a pass or fail basis. Only those applications that **specifically address and pass each of the threshold criteria** listed below will be evaluated against the ranking criteria in [Section V.A.](#) of this announcement. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of failing the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

For purposes of the threshold eligibility review, EPA, if necessary, may seek clarification of applicant information that is included in the application and/or consider information from other sources, including EPA files. Such communications shall not be used to correct application deficiencies or material omissions, materially alter the application or project proposed, or discuss changes to the applicant's responses to any evaluation or selection criteria. The applicant's responses to the threshold criteria **must be included in the narrative information sheet** submitted to EPA or the application will be rejected.

If an application is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities, that portion of the application will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the application, render the entire application ineligible for funding.

The threshold criteria for the Brownfields research and technical assistance cooperative agreement applications are as follows:

1. Applicants must be eligible entities. Applicants should describe how they are an eligible applicant as described in [Section III.A.](#), *Who can Apply*. Eligible non-profit entities must attach documentation/evidence of nonprofit status under Federal, state or tribal law, as applicable.
2. Applicants must propose projects that are nationwide in scope.
3. Applications must not request funds more than \$1,000,000 for topics 1, 2, or 3; and must not request funds more than \$500,000 for topics 4 or 5.
4. Applications must substantially conform to the outline and content detailed in [Section IV.C.](#), *Content and Form of Application*, of this announcement or they will be rejected. Pages in excess of the page limitations expressed in [Section IV.C.](#), *Content and Form of Application*, will not be reviewed. If you want to apply for more than one topic, you must submit a separate application for each topic.
5. In addition, initial applications must be submitted through Grants.gov as stated in Section IV of this solicitation (except in the limited circumstances where another mode of

submission is specifically allowed for as explained in Section IV) on or before the application submission deadline published in Section IV of this solicitation. Applicants are responsible for following the submission instructions in Section IV of this solicitation to ensure that their application is timely submitted.

6. Applications submitted after the submission deadline will be considered late and deemed ineligible without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling or because of technical problems associated with Grants.gov or relevant SAM.gov system issues. An applicant's failure to timely submit their application through Grants.gov because they did not timely or properly register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov will not be considered an acceptable reason to consider a late submission. Applicants should confirm receipt of their application with Matt Wosje (wosje.matthew@epa.gov) as soon as possible after the submission deadline— failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

SECTION IV. – APPLICATION SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#).

IV.A. How to Obtain an Application Package

An application package may be obtained by visiting this opportunity (EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-22-12) on www.grants.gov. Applicants will be prompted to initiate the application process by generating a Workspace for this opportunity.

IV.B. Due Date and Submission Instructions

Your organization's Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) must submit your complete application package⁹ electronically to EPA through www.grants.gov. Applications must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. ET on **February 14, 2023**. Please allow enough time to successfully submit your application package and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit. Occasionally, technical and other issues arise when using www.grants.gov.

Applications received after 11:59 p.m. ET on **February 14, 2023**, will not be considered for funding.

Follow the Submission Instructions in Section B.1. in [Appendix 1](#) for the requirements to apply in www.grants.gov. In order to submit an application through www.grants.gov, your organization must:

- Have an active System for Award Management (SAM) account in www.sam.gov and a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) assigned by www.sam.gov;
- Be registered in www.grants.gov; and
- Have the E-Business Point of Contact designate an AOR in www.grants.gov.

⁹ Note, for the purposes of this competition, the “application package” includes the required federal forms available at www.grants.gov, as well as the Narrative Information Sheet, the Narrative and associated attachments.

The registration process for all the above items **may take a month or more to complete**. Please refer to the [FAQs](#) for additional information on the registration requirements.

The electronic submission of your application must be made by the AOR of your institution who is registered with www.grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for federal assistance. Refer to [Appendix 1](#) for specific instructions on how to apply through www.grants.gov.

If you do not have the technical capability to apply electronically through www.grants.gov because of limited or no Internet access which prevents you from being able to upload the required application materials to www.grants.gov, please refer to the procedures in [Appendix 1](#).

You should make every effort to complete the registration process in order to apply through www.grants.gov. However, if you are experiencing technical difficulties in applying through www.grants.gov because of operational or other issues related to COVID-19, you may request to submit the application by email. Email your request (which must include an explanation of the COVID-19 related issue you are experiencing and the specific reason you are unable to submit the application through www.grants.gov) and the complete application to Matt Wosje ([vosje.matthew@epa.gov](mailto:wosje.matthew@epa.gov)) by **February 14, 2023**, at 11:59 PM ET. Requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. There is no guarantee EPA will accept the submission outside of www.grants.gov. **Requests received after February 14, 2023, at 11:59 PM ET will not be reviewed or considered.**

If you submit more than one application for the same, identical project (either in error or to replace a previously submitted application), EPA will only review the most recently received application for that project unless you notify Matt Wosje ([vosje.matthew@epa.govmailto:rana.sahar@epa.gov](mailto:wosje.matthew@epa.govmailto:rana.sahar@epa.gov)) and specify which application you want EPA to review.

IV.C. Content and Form of Application Submission

The application must stand on its own merits based on the responses to the relevant ranking criteria in [Section IV.E](#).

All application materials must be in English. The Narrative Information Sheet and the Narrative must be typed, single-spaced, on letter-sized (8.5 x 11-inch) paper, and should **use standard Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri fonts with a 12-point font size**. The Application Submission Checklist below outlines the documents to include in the application. Extraneous materials, including photos, graphics, and attachments not listed, will not be considered.

Application Content

All applications must substantially conform to the following outline and content (pages in excess of the stated page limitations will not be reviewed):

- The narrative information sheet, **including responses to threshold eligibility criteria in Section III.C.** (3-page limit, single-spaced)
- The Narrative, which includes the responses to all **ranking** criteria (15-page limit, single-spaced)
- Attachments
 - Milestones schedule
 - Documentation of applicant eligibility, if applicable

Note: Documentation of nonprofit applicant eligibility must be included with the required attachments but does **NOT** count towards the attachments page limitation.

IV.D. Narrative Information Sheet

The Narrative Information Sheet must address the information below and shall not exceed three (3), single-spaced pages. Do not include a summary or overview of your narrative/project. Any pages submitted over the page limit will not be considered. EPA does not consider information in the Narrative Information Sheet to be responses to the ranking criteria. Each Narrative Information Sheet must be on the applicant’s official letterhead and signed by an official with the authority to commit your organization to the proposed project.

1. Applicant Identification Provide the name and full address of the entity applying for funds. This is the agency or organization that will receive the grant and will be accountable to EPA for the proper expenditure of funds. **Include the applicant’s Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Number.**
2. Funding Requested
 - a. Grant Type Indicate “Brownfields Training, Research, and Technical Assistance grant.”
 - b. Federal Funds Requested Include the amount being requested from EPA; must not exceed \$1,000,000 for topics 1, 2, or 3; must not exceed \$500,000 for topic 4 or 5.
3. Contacts
 - a. Project Director Provide the name, phone number, email address, and mailing address of the Project Director assigned to this proposed project. This person should be the main point of contact for the project and should be the person responsible for the project’s day-to-day operations. The Project Director may be contacted if other information is needed.
 - b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official Provide the name, phone number, email address, and mailing address of the applicant’s Chief Executive or highest ranking elected official. For example, provide this information for your organization’s Executive Director or President. These individuals may be contacted if other information is needed.
4. Project Period Length of proposed project period (must not exceed five (5) years for topic areas 1, 2 or 3; four (4) years for topics 4 or 5).
5. Releasing Copies of Applications
In concert with EPA’s commitment to conducting business in an open and transparent manner, copies of applications submitted under this solicitation may be made publicly

available on [EPA's Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization](#) website or other public website for a period of time after the selected applications are announced. EPA recommends that applications not include trade secrets or commercial or financial information that is confidential or privileged, or sensitive information, if disclosed, that would invade another individual's personal privacy (e.g., an individual's salary, personal email addresses, etc.). However, if such information is included, it will be treated in accordance with [40 CFR § 2.203](#). (Review [Section IV.G.](#) for more information.)

Clearly indicate which portion(s) of the application you are claiming as confidential, privileged, or sensitive information, or state 'n/a' or 'not applicable' if the application does not have confidential, privileged, or sensitive information. As provided at 40 CFR § 2.203(b) if no claim of confidential treatment accompanies the information when it is received by EPA, it may be made available to the public by EPA without further notice to the submitter.

IV.E. Narrative/Ranking Criteria

The Narrative (including citations) shall not exceed 15 single-spaced pages. Any pages submitted over the page limit will not be evaluated.

The Narrative must include clear, concise, and factual responses to all ranking criteria and sub-criteria below. The Narrative must provide sufficient detail to allow for an evaluation of the merits of the application. **A response to a criterion/sub-criterion that is included in a different section of the Narrative may not be scored as favorably.** If a criterion does not apply, clearly state this. **Any criterion left unanswered may result in zero points given for that criterion.** Responses to the criteria should include the criteria number and title but need not restate the entire text of the criteria.

If the application is selected for funding, the information in the Narrative will be incorporated into the workplan and will become the scope of the cooperative agreement, subject to any adjustments to clarify issues with carrying out the project's scope of work made during the post-selection negotiation process. The workplan is a legally binding document. Therefore, applicants should carefully consider and accurately respond to the criteria below based on the specific goals and activities described under each topic (1, 2, 3, 4 or 5) per [Section I.B.](#), the use of grant funds, and leveraged resources committed to the project that will materialize during the period of performance. EPA may not permit material changes to the workplan.

The information below includes sample format tables that applicants may use to present all or a portion of their response. Applicants who do not use the sample format tables will not be penalized when EPA evaluates their applications.

- i. **Project Description** – This section must provide the information below on how you (the applicant) will implement and conduct the proposed project.

- Describe the current problem(s), and then your proposed solution(s) for addressing the problem(s). Include a summary of your overall project approach, benefits, and milestones as well as your strategy to accomplish the project goals.
- Include the types of technical assistance and/or research that you will provide to brownfields communities nationwide, including the estimated number of communities and organizations your project will support and how you will ensure geographic variability. Include a description of how your project will:
 - ensure the fair distribution of assistance between urban and non-urban areas,
 - promote community engagement and active involvement in brownfields prioritization, assessment, cleanup and reuse decisions within areas in which one or more brownfield sites are located (including decisions affecting environmental justice, rural communities, and/or tribal groups), and
 - employ the most effective and efficient methods of delivering technical assistance for the communities and organizations your project will serve.
 - ensure communities and organizations are aware of the availability of the project's technical support by discussing your outreach plan/strategy.
- Describe how your project will result in informational materials, guides, training and other resources, peer learning and technical assistance that will promote capacity and build knowledge of the applicable topic.
- Provide information on how your project will help communities identify available funds for assessment, cleanup and reuse or help to stimulate economic development in areas affected by brownfield sites.
- Provide information on how your project will help facilitate the identification and reduction of threats to:
 - human health and the environment that may be associated with exposure to hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants, and
 - the health or welfare of children, pregnant women, minority or low-income communities, or other sensitive populations.
- Discuss how your project will help facilitate the use or reuse of existing infrastructure, energy efficiency or siting a facility that generates renewable energy on a brownfield, create or preserve greenspace, or assist in other nonprofit reuses of brownfields.
- Include in your discussion how your project plan and approach, including the extent to which you propose to use sub awardees or contractors (perhaps having different areas of technical/legal/fiscal/other expertise, if any) will contribute to the effective and efficient performance of the project, and the methods you plan to use to provide technical assistance (one-on-one, workshops, webinars, other) and/or conduct research.

ii. **Organizational Knowledge/Experience/Expertise** – This section must provide the information below on how you (the applicant) have knowledge, experience and expertise to perform your proposed project.

- Summarize your organization’s knowledge, experience, and expertise relevant to topic 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 as per [Section I.B.](#) Include information regarding your staff knowledge, expertise, and qualifications and your organization’s available resources (or the ability to obtain necessary resources, including the organization’s contingency plan to replace key personnel) to successfully achieve the goals of your project.
- Discuss your organization’s knowledge, experience, and expertise in helping communities and organizations address brownfield challenges, emphasizing how you have supported communities and organizations within the applicable topic.
- Provide information on your organizational experience and your plan for successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project. Include a discussion of the network you have in place to identify and mobilize resources, such as proposed partnerships, stakeholder groups, or other networks that will be involved and their role in the successful accomplishment of your proposed project.

Note: EPA anticipates it may be necessary for applicants to form partnerships with other organizations through subawards or obtain professional services through competitive procurements. Please refer to Section IV.G. Also note that procurement of commercial services (e.g., consultants, audio visual equipment, meeting space) is subject to the Procurement Standards of 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 1500, as applicable. Naming a commercial vendor or individual consultant as a “partner” does not relieve the applicant of responsibility for complying with competitive procurement requirements, including cost or price analysis. Refer to EPA’s [Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements](#) for additional information on competition requirements.

These awards will include terms and conditions requiring that the recipient ensure that technical assistance services provided under the award are performed in a manner that prevents conflicts of interest from tainting procurements financed with Federal funding. For example, if a consultant hired by a recipient provides technical assistance on site assessment or remediation issues to a recipient of Brownfields funding, the consultant may not participate in the development of procurement specifications or other activities that violate the provisions in 2 CFR 200.319 on full and open competition for federally funded contracts. Consultants may not receive sole source contracts based on their role in providing technical assistance funded through cooperative agreements. Award terms and conditions will also include restrictions that prevent consultants from marketing their services or those of affiliated firms to applicants or recipients of federal grants while providing EPA funded technical assistance. In addition, if the applicant or their subrecipients have both nonprofit and for-profit components of their organizations, then the nonprofit portion implementing the cooperative agreement/subcontract is prohibited from recommending that communities use the services of its for-profit component when being reimbursed for their services under the cooperative agreement.

- iii. **Past Performance** - This section must provide the information below on how you (the applicant) are able to successfully complete and manage your proposed project.

- Submit a list of federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements, but not Federal contracts) that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than five agreements, and preferably EPA agreements, if any)
- Describe:
 - whether and how you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements and achieve the objectives of the project, and
 - your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements, including whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why not) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements.

If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for these factors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). Applications that do not provide any response for this criterion may receive a score of 0.

- iv. **Community Need** – This section must provide the information below on how you (the applicant) will deliver a project that meets the needs of and will benefit communities.
- Describe how your proposed project will meet the needs of communities who are unable to draw on other sources of funding for environmental remediation and subsequent reuse of brownfield sites located in low-income or sparsely populated communities.
 - Discuss how the proposed project will benefit communities with demographic and environmental indicators of need and the extent to which these needs relate to current brownfield and other environmental challenges, including how the project will increase the capacity of communities and organizations to address issues related to the applicable topic.
- v. **Budget/Resources** - This section must provide the information below on how you (the applicant) will budget for and manage your project appropriately.
- Provide a detailed itemized budget application that is reasonable and appropriate to achieve your project’s objectives. Clearly explain how funds will be used. EPA provides detailed guidance on preparing budgets in the [Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance](#).

The budget should include information on each major task using the cost elements outlined below. For each major task indicate what portion of the cost associated with the task will be covered with EPA cooperative agreement funds. Indicate what portion of the costs the applicant or other partners will fund, if any. Applicants may, but are not required to, use the sample format for their budget provided below. Applicants who choose to use a different format will not be penalized.

Sample Format for Budget

Budget Categories		Project Tasks (\$)				Total
		(Task 1)	(Task 2)	(Task 3)	(Task 4)	
Direct Costs	Personnel					
	Fringe Benefits					
	Travel ¹					
	Equipment ²					
	Supplies					
	Contractual					
	Other (include subawards and participant support costs) (specify) _____					
Total Direct Costs ³						
Indirect Costs ³						
Total Federal Funding (not to exceed \$1,000,000 for topics 1, 2, or 3; not to exceed \$500,000 for topics 4 or 5)						
Total Budget (Total Direct Costs + Indirect Costs + Cost Share, if any)						
<p>¹ Travel to brownfields-related training conferences is an acceptable use of these cooperative agreement funds.</p> <p>² EPA defines equipment as items that cost \$5,000 or more with a useful life of more than one year. Items costing less than \$5,000 are considered supplies. Generally, equipment is not required for Brownfield cooperative agreements.</p> <p>³ Administrative costs (direct and/or indirect) cannot exceed 5% of the total EPA-requested funds.</p>						

- vi. **Performance Measurement: Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs** – This section must provide the information below on how you (the applicant) will measure and track project outcomes and outputs.
 - Specify the anticipated environmental outcomes and outputs as described in [Section I.E., Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs](#) of this announcement. Discuss how you propose to track, measure, and evaluate your progress in achieving the project outcomes, outputs, and project results, including both quantitative and qualitative performance measurements. (Refer to [Section V.A., Evaluation Criteria, Performance Measurement.](#))

- vii. **Leveraging** - This section of your application provides how you (the applicant) will leverage additional resources for your proposed project.
 - Demonstrate how you will leverage additional funds/resources beyond the EPA cooperative agreement funds awarded to support your proposed project activities, and how these leveraged funds/resources will be used to contribute to the performance and success of the proposed project. Describe the extent to which in-kind and/or partner commitments to providing services/resources to the proposed project are available, and whether these commitments have already been made; if leveraged

resources are not yet committed to the project, describe the likelihood that these commitments will materialize during the project.

- Describe the amount(s) and type(s) of leveraged resources and for which tasks they may be used. Consider using the optional table format below to illustrate the tasks for which leveraged resources will be used and the level of leveraged resource you plan to use for each task. Please modify task categories and add rows as necessary. For each source, list whether it is an anticipated resource or a confirmed resource.

Selected applicants are expected to abide by their proposed leveraging commitments during cooperative agreement performance and the failure to do so may affect the legitimacy of the award.

Applicants may, but are not required to, use the optional table for describing leveraged resources provided below. Applicants who choose to use a different format will not be penalized.

Leveraged Resources Table (Optional)

Project Funding	Status of Resource: Anticipated/ Confirmed	Project Tasks				Total
		Outreach	Instruction/ Training	Program Management	Research	
[Resource 1]						
[Resource 2]						
[Resource 3]						
Total Non-EPA Resources Leveraged:						

IV.F. Confidential Business Information

As discussed in [Section IV.D., Narrative Information Sheet](#), EPA recommends that you do not include confidential business information (CBI) in your application. However, if CBI is included, it will be treated in accordance with [40 CFR 2.203](#). Applicants must clearly indicate which portion(s) of their application they are claiming as CBI. EPA will evaluate such claims in accordance with [40 CFR Part 2](#). If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by [40 CFR 2.204\(c\)\(2\)](#) prior to disclosure. The agency protects competitive applications from disclosure under applicable provisions of the Freedom of Information Act until the completion of the competitive selection process.

SECTION V. – NARRATIVE REVIEW INFORMATION

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#).

V.A. Evaluation Criteria

Each eligible application will be evaluated according to the criteria set forth below. Applicants must directly and explicitly address the ranking criteria in their application. An application may be assigned up to 100 points.

Criterion	Maximum Points per Criterion
<p>Project Description. This criterion will evaluate the extent and quality to which the application effectively addresses the requirements for the applicable topic as described in Section I.B of this solicitation and as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the “Narrative” clearly and concisely presents a statement of the problem and practical descriptions of the proposed project approach, benefits, and project milestones for the applicable topic area. (10 points) • The extent to which the project will support brownfields communities nationwide, ensuring geographic variability. The appropriateness of the methods by which the applicant will ensure the fair distribution of assistance between urban and non-urban areas and the outreach plan/strategy to ensure communities and organizations are aware of the project and support available will also be evaluated. (5 points) • The extent to which the informational materials, guides, trainings and other resources, peer learning, research and technical assistance will build capacity and knowledge of the applicable topic amongst a variety of brownfields stakeholders. (5 points) • The extent to which the project outcomes will help identify and stimulate the availability of funds for assessment, cleanup and reuse or help to stimulate economic development in areas affected by brownfield sites. (5 points) • The extent to which the project will help facilitate the identification and reduction of threats to human health and the environment that may be associated with exposure to hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants, and how the project will facilitate the identification and reduction of threats to the health or welfare of children, pregnant women, minority or low-income communities, or other sensitive populations. (5 points) • The extent that the project will help facilitate the use or reuse of existing infrastructure, energy efficiency or siting a facility that generates renewable energy on a brownfield, create or preserve greenspace, or assist in other nonprofit reuses of brownfields. (5 points) • The extent to which the applicant’s proposed plan and approach will enable the applicant to achieve the goals of the project effectively and efficiently, including the mechanisms that will be used to implement the project and the use of subawards or contractors, if any. Applicants will be 	40

<p>evaluated less favorably if the project consists of holding general brownfields meetings, workshops, trainings, or conferences. (5 points)</p>	
<p>Organizational Knowledge/Experience/Expertise. This criterion will evaluate the extent and quality to which the application demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depth of staff expertise, qualifications, and knowledge in the topic being addressed by this application and as described in Section I.B including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the applicant’s resources or the ability to obtain them via subaward or contract to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project, and ○ the applicant’s contingency plan to replace key personnel as necessary. <p>(10 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant’s organizational knowledge and experience in helping communities address brownfield challenges, including ability to work effectively with communities and organizations in the relevant topic, engage them in brownfield prioritization, assessment, cleanup and redevelopment issues, and deliver sound and effective technical assistance to communities. (5 points) • The applicant’s experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, including having the necessary partnerships, contacts, or established network. (5 points) 	20
<p>Past Performance. This criterion will evaluate the extent to which the application demonstrates ability to successfully complete and manage the applicant’s proposed project, taking into account their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.E of the announcement. (5 points) • History of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.E of the announcement including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements, and the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on its progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements. If such progress was not being made, whether the applicant adequately reported why not will be considered. (5 points) <p>Note: In evaluating the application under the two items above, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the</p>	10

<p>application and you will receive a neutral score for these subfactors. Applications that do not provide any response for this criterion may receive a score of 0.</p>	
<p>Community Need. This criterion will evaluate the degree to which the application demonstrates that the proposed project will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the needs of communities that are unable to draw on other sources of funding. (5 points) • Benefit communities with demographic and environmental indicators of need, and the extent to which these needs relate to current brownfield and other environmental challenges. Benefits include how the project will increase the capacity of communities and organizations to address issues related to the topic being addressed by this application. (5 points) 	10
<p>Budget/Resources. This criterion will evaluate the extent to which the application demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clearly stated, detailed, reasonable, and appropriate budget designed to achieve the project’s objectives, including cost estimates for each of the proposed project activities to be performed with the EPA funds. The applicant’s budget will also be evaluated based on the degree to which it describes an effective use of the budget resources for the work to be performed. (10 points) 	10
<p>Performance Measurement: Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs. This criterion will evaluate the extent to which the application demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A realistic approach to how the project will lead to measurable long-term outcomes and short-term outputs, including qualitative, quantitative, environmental, social, or economic measures. The degree to which specific outputs and outcomes are described and how these measures will be evaluated throughout the life of the project. The degree to which the applicant can easily identify when the project is or is not on schedule and the degree to which the approaches, procedures, and/or controls demonstrate the applicant’s readiness to achieve the project goals and deliverables in an efficient manner. (5 points) 	5
<p>Leveraging. This criterion will evaluate the extent to which the application demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the applicant will coordinate the use of the EPA funds with other Federal or non-Federal sources of funds from project partners, including other Federal agencies, foundations, non-profits, surrounding communities, or local businesses to leverage additional resources beyond the funds awarded to carry out their proposed project. The application will be evaluated on the type and amount of leveraged resources, the likelihood 	5

<p>of the resources materializing, the strength of the leveraging commitment, and the role that the leveraged funds/resources will play in the overall project. Applications with firm leveraged commitments or with leveraged commitments that will significantly enhance the project will be evaluated more favorably. (5 points)</p>	
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V.B. Review and Selection Process

All applications received by the closing date and time for submissions will first be reviewed to determine eligibility for funding consideration based upon compliance with [Section III. Eligibility Information and Threshold Criteria](#). Only applications determined eligible and passing the threshold review will be evaluated for technical merit.

Each eligible application will be evaluated by a review panel of EPA staff for technical merit, based on the evaluation factors detailed in [Section V.A. Evaluation Criteria](#) of this solicitation. There will be separate ranking lists for applications per each topic. Upon completion of the technical merit evaluation, each application will be given an evaluated numerical score, with a total of 100 points possible. The evaluated numerical scores will be placed in rank order for each topic, and this will be provided to the EPA Headquarters Selection Official.

EPA intends to make awards to the highest scored applications per topic. EPA’s Headquarters Selection Official will make the final funding decisions.

SECTION VI. – AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#).

VI.A. Award Notices

Applicants who fail the threshold eligibility requirements will be notified within 15 calendar days of EPA’s determination of ineligibility. EPA will notify applicants who are not selected for award based on the evaluation criteria and other considerations within 15 calendar days of EPA’s final decision on selections for this competition.

EPA anticipates notification to successful applicants will be made via email by late Spring 2023. The notification will be sent to the Project Director and Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official listed in the Narrative Information Sheet in [Section IV.D](#). This notification, which informs the applicant that its application is selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by the Headquarters Award Official (EPA Grants Officer). **Applicants are cautioned that only a grants officer is authorized to bind the Government to the obligation of funds; selection does not guarantee an award will be made.** For example, statutory authorization, funding, or other issues discovered during the award process may affect the ability of EPA to make an award

to an applicant. The award notice, signed by an EPA grants officer, is the authorizing document and will be provided through email or postal mail. The successful applicant may need to prepare and submit additional documents and forms (e.g., a workplan), which must be approved by EPA before the grant can officially be awarded. The time between notification of selection and award of a grant can take up to 90 days or longer.

VI.B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Funding will be awarded as a cooperative agreement. The applicants who are selected for award will work with an EPA Project Officer to finalize the required federal application package and to negotiate the cooperative agreement workplan.
2. Approved cooperative agreements will include terms and conditions that will be binding on the recipient. Terms and conditions specify what recipients must do to ensure that grant-related and Brownfields Program-related requirements are met. Applicants also will be required to submit progress reports in accordance with Uniform Grant Guidance found in 2 CFR § 200.329.
3. An applicant that receives an award under this announcement is expected to manage assistance agreement funds efficiently and effectively and make sufficient progress towards completing the project activities described in the workplan in a timely manner. The assistance agreement will include terms and conditions implementing this requirement.

VI.C. Reporting Requirements

Quarterly progress reports and a detailed final report will be required. The quarterly progress reports will be submitted to the EPA Project Officer within thirty days after each reporting period. These reports shall cover work status, work progress, milestones, outputs/outcomes reached, difficulties encountered, preliminary data results and a statement of activity anticipated during the subsequent reporting period. A discussion of expenditures along with a comparison of the percentage of the project completed to the project schedule and an explanation of significant discrepancies shall be included in the report. The report shall also include any changes of key personnel concerned with the project.

Recipient(s) must submit updates on all cooperative agreement funded activities using the relevant modules in the Assessment, Cleanup, and Redevelopment Exchange System (ACRES). This includes all direct engagement and multi-community activities, such as trainings or workshops, and brownfields tool development. Quarterly reports must include the number, locations, and amount of cooperative agreement funds spent to-date on each engagement and activity. Additional reporting requirements may be required to reflect progress under the Investing in Infrastructure and Jobs Act.

EPA expects timely drawdown of funds and a yearly financial report. In addition to quarterly reports, the financial reports will provide EPA with information regarding the progress being made.

The final report will address goals and objectives, performance measurements, lessons learned, any other resources leveraged during the project and how they were used, and any plans to continue the project after the expiration of the cooperative agreement and associated sources of funding. The final report will be submitted to the EPA Project Officer at the close of the cooperative agreement.

VI.D. Disputes

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found on the [Grant Competition Dispute Resolution Procedures](#) website. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting the Brownfields Contact listed in [Section VII.](#) of this announcement. Note, the FR notice references regulations at 40 CFR Parts 30 and 31 that have been superseded by regulations in 2 CFR Parts 200 and 1500. Notwithstanding the regulatory changes, the procedures for competition-related disputes remain unchanged from the procedures described at 70 FR 3629, 3630, as indicated in 2 CFR Part 1500, Subpart E.

VI.E. Combining Applications into One Award

If an applicant submits applications for multiple topics under this competition, and is selected for multiple awards, EPA may award a single cooperative agreement that combines separate applications for the different topics.

SECTION VII. - AGENCY CONTACT

Matthew Wosje, U.S. EPA, Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization (MC 5105-T),
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20460; Phone (202) 566-1060;
wosje.matthew@epa.gov.

Appendix 1

Grants.gov Application Submission Instructions

A. Requirements to Submit Through Grants.gov and Limited Exception Procedures

Applicants must apply electronically through www.grants.gov under this funding opportunity based on the www.grants.gov instructions in this announcement. If your organization has no access to the Internet or access is very limited, you may request an exception for the remainder of this calendar year by following the procedures outlined at www.epa.gov/grants/exceptions-grantsgov-submission-requirement. Please note that your request must be received *at least 15 calendar days* before the application due date to allow enough time to negotiate alternative submission methods. Issues with submissions with respect to this opportunity only are addressed in Section C. *Technical Issues with Submission* below.

B. Submission Instructions

B.1. SAM.gov (System for Award Management) Registration Instructions

Organizations applying to this funding opportunity must have an active SAM.gov registration. If you have never done business with the Federal Government, you will need to register your organization at www.sam.gov. If you do not have a SAM.gov account, then you will create an account using [Login.gov](http://login.gov)¹⁰ to complete your SAM.gov registration. SAM.gov registration is FREE. The process for entity registrations includes obtaining a Unique Entity ID (UEI), a 12-character alphanumeric ID assigned to an entity by SAM.gov, and requires assertions, representations and certifications, and other information about your organization. Please review the [Entity Registration Checklist](#) for details on this process.

If you have done business with the Federal Government previously, you can check your entity status using your government issued UEI to determine if your registration is active. SAM.gov requires you to renew your registration every 365 days to keep it active.

Please note that SAM.gov registration is different than obtaining a UEI only. Obtaining a UEI only validates your organization's legal business name and address. Please review the registration [Frequently Asked Question](#) for additional details on the difference.

Organizations should ensure that their SAM.gov registration includes a current e-Business (EBiz) point of contact name and email address. The EBiz point of contact is critical for Grants.gov Registration and system functionality.

Contact the [Federal Service Desk](#) (866-606-8220) for help with your SAM.gov account, to resolve technical issues or chat with a help desk agent. The Federal Service desk hours of operation are Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. ET.

¹⁰ Login.gov a secure sign in service used by the public to sign into Federal Agency systems including SAM.gov and Grants.gov. For help with login.gov accounts you should visit <http://login.gov/help>.

B.2. Grants.gov Registration Instructions

Once your SAM.gov account is active, you must register in Grants.gov. Grants.gov will electronically receive your organization information, such as e-Business (EBiz) point of contact email address and UEI. Organizations applying to this funding opportunity must have an active Grants.gov registration. Grants.gov registration is FREE. If you have never applied for a federal grant before, please review the [Grants.gov Applicant Registration](#) instructions. As part of the Grants.gov registration process, the **EBiz point of contact is the only person that can affiliate and assign applicant roles to members of an organization**. In addition, at least one person must be assigned as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). **Only person(s) with the AOR role can submit applications in Grants.gov**. Please review the [Intro to Grants.gov- Understanding User Roles](#) and [Learning Workspace – User Roles and Workspace Actions](#) for details on this important process.

Please note that this process can take **a month or more** for new registrants. Applicants must ensure that all registration requirements are met in order to apply for this opportunity through Grants.gov and should ensure that all such requirements have been met well in advance of the application submission deadline.

Contact [Grants.gov](#) for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov to resolve technical issues with Grants.gov. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. The Grants.gov Support Center is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week, excluding federal holidays.

B.3. Application Submission Process

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to www.grants.gov and enter the Funding Opportunity Number, **EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-22-12**, into the search box in the top right corner of the page. Click on the “GO” button to view the “View Grant Opportunity” page and click the red “Apply” button at the top of the page.

The electronic submission of your application for this funding opportunity must be made by an official representative of your organization who is registered with www.grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for Federal financial assistance. If the submit button is grayed out, it may be because you do not have the appropriate role to submit in your organization. Contact your organization’s EBiz point of contact or contact Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov.

Applicants need to ensure that the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) who submits the application through www.grants.gov and whose UEI is listed on the application is an AOR for the applicant listed on the application. Additionally, the UEI listed on the application must be

registered to the applicant organization's SAM.gov account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

B.4. Application Submission Deadline

Your organization's AOR must successfully submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through www.grants.gov **no later than February 14, 2023, 11:59 p.m. ET**. Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.

After signing and successfully submitting the application package, within 24 to 48 hours the AOR should receive notification emails from www.grants.gov with the following subject lines:

- 1. GRANT##### Grants.gov Submission Receipt**
- 2. GRANT##### Grants.gov Submission Validation Receipt for Application**

If the AOR did not receive either notification emails listed above, contact the www.grants.gov Support Center at 1-800-518-4726. The Support Center is open 24/7 (except federal holidays).

After the application package is retrieved out of the www.grants.gov system by EPA, the AOR should receive the following notification emails from www.grants.gov:

- 3. GRANT##### Grants.gov Grantor Agency Retrieval Receipt for Application**
- 4. GRANT##### Grants.gov Agency Tracking Number Assignment for Application**

Applications submitted through www.grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically. If you do not receive a confirmation of receipt from EPA (not from www.grants.gov) within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact Matt Wosje ([vosje.matthew@epa.gov](mailto:wosje.matthew@epa.gov)). Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed. Please note that successful submission of your application through www.grants.gov does not necessarily mean your application is eligible for award.

C. Technical Issues with Submission

If applicants experience technical issues during the submission of an application that they are unable to resolve, follow these procedures **before** the application deadline date:

1. Contact the www.grants.gov Support Center **before** the application deadline date at 1-800-518-4726 or https://gditshared.servicenowservices.com/hhs_grants.
2. Document the www.grants.gov ticket/case number.
3. Send an email with the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-22-12, in the subject line to Matt Wosje ([vosje.matthew@epa.gov](mailto:wosje.matthew@epa.gov)) **before** the application deadline time and date. The email **must** include the following:
 - a. The www.grants.gov ticket/case number(s).

- b. A description of the issue.
- c. The entire application package in PDF format.

Without this information, EPA may not be able to consider applications submitted outside of www.grants.gov. Any application submitted after the application deadline time and date deadline will be deemed ineligible and **not** be considered.

EPA will make decisions concerning acceptance of each application submitted outside of www.grants.gov on a case-by-case basis. EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to submit through www.grants.gov due to www.grants.gov or relevant www.sam.gov system issues or for unforeseen exigent circumstances, such as extreme weather interfering with Internet access. Failure of an applicant to submit prior to the application submission deadline time and date because they did not properly or timely register in www.sam.gov or www.grants.gov is not an acceptable reason to justify acceptance of an application outside of www.grants.gov.

D. Application Materials

The following forms and documents are **required** under this announcement.

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
3. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
4. Preaward Compliance Review Report (EPA Form 4700-4) [Guidance on how to complete this form is available at www.epa.gov/grants/tips-completing-epa-form-4700-4.]
5. Project Narrative Attachment Form – attach the Narrative Information Sheet, the Narrative, and required attachments as one file, if possible. See [Section IV.C](#) for details on the required content and the associated page limits.

The following forms and documents are **optional** under this announcement.

1. Grants.gov Lobbying Form – To be submitted by applicants requesting **more than** \$100,000 of EPA grant funding.
2. Negotiated/Proposed Indirect Cost Rate Agreement – To be submitted using the Project Narrative Attachment Form by applicants proposing to charge indirect costs to the EPA grant. Please note that applicants may budget for indirect costs pending approval of their Indirect Cost Rate Agreement by the cognizant Federal agency or an exception granted by EPA under section 6.3 or 6.4 of [EPA's Indirect Cost Policy for Recipients of EPA Assistance Agreements](#). However, recipients may not draw down indirect costs until their rate is approved or EPA grants an exception.

Note: A workplan is not required under this announcement. Applicants that are selected for funding will negotiate the workplan with EPA before the cooperative agreement is awarded. Additionally, selected applicants must provide EPA with other required forms and documents, as appropriate, to award the cooperative agreement.