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IV.D. Narrative Information Sheet

1. Applicant Identification:
LEAP Social Enterprise Inc.
 21 Reagan Ln Voorhees, NJ, 08043-4143 USA
 (856) 255-6903
2. Funding Requested:
 - a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-wide Assessment Grant
 - b. Federal Funds Requested: \$500,000
3. Location:
 - a. Various communities (target areas are in Rio Piedras (in the City of San Juan), Carolina, Juncos, and Humacao)
 - b. Four (4) municipalities (counties) including San Juan, Carolina, Juncos, and Humacao
 - c. Puerto Rico
4. Target Areas:
 - a. Rio Piedras District (RP) – portions of Census Tracts 54.02 & 55 bounded by C-14 St. to the north, Rafael Hernandez Marin Ave. to the south, Jose Abad St. to the east, and Paganini St. to the west in the San Juan metropolitan area, is a mixed commercial and residential area.

 Carolina District (CD) – portions of Census Tracts 505.04 & 601.04 located between 1 Urb. Metropolis St. to the north, Loiza River to the south, PR-860 to the east, and PR-181 to the west. Primarily a residential area with some industrial and commercial use.

 PR-198 Corridor (Corridor) – portions of Census Tracts 1016 and 2004 following PR-198 for 8 miles between Juncos to Humacao.
 - b. Priority Sites:
 - Gerardo S. Solá School – Ave. 65 Inf. Hm2, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00924
 - LEAP Sabana Llana – Ave. 65 Inf. Hm2, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00924
 - Juana A. Méndez School – PR-1, Urb. Metropolis, Carolina PR, 00987
 - Antonia Saez School – Fort Martelo St., Humacao, PR 00791
 - José A. López School – Calle Algarin Final, BO Mamey, Juncos, PR 00777
5. Contacts:
 - a. Project Director:
 Gloria Bonilla-Santiago
 (856) 225-6348
gloriab@camden.rutgers.edu
 21 Reagan Ln Voorhees, NJ, 08043-4143 USA

- b. Chief Executive:
Gloria Bonilla-Santiago
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6. Population:
- a. San Juan – 342,259
 - b. Carolina – 154,815
 - c. Juncos – 37,012
 - d. Humacao – 50,896 (2020 Decennial Census)

7. Other Factors Checklist

Other Factors	Page#
Community population is 10,000 or less.	
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory.	
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	
The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).	
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	Page 3
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	Page 3
The reuse strategy or project reuse of the priority site(s) considers climate adaptation and/or mitigation measures.	Page 3
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section I.B., for priority site(s) within the target area(s).	
The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2012 or later) or is closing.	

8. Letter from the Puerto Rico Department of Environmental and Natural Resources is attached.
9. Releasing Copies of Applications: Not Applicable



GOVERNMENT OF PUERTO RICO
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

NOV 21 2022

Dra. Gloria Bonilla-Santiago

President y CEO
LEAP Social Enterprise
PO Box 590
Camden, NJ 08102

Dear doctor Bonilla-Santiago:

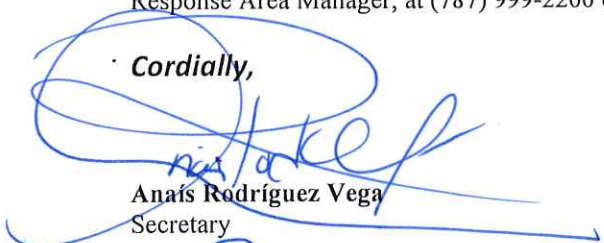
**LEAP SOCIAL ENTERPRISE ACKNOWLEDGMENT LETTER FOR THE INTENTION TO APPLY FOR
FY-23 US EPA BROWNFIELD'S PROGRAM FOR A COMMUNITY-WIDE BROWNFIELD PETROLEUM
AND HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES ASSESSMENT GRANT**

The Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER) Superfund Program has received a letter from LEAP Social Enterprise informing its intention to apply for a Community-Wide Brownfields Petroleum and Hazardous Substance Assessment Grant.

DNER acknowledges and support the initiative taken by LEAP Social Enterprise. The identification, inventory development, assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of Brownfields sites will provide an opportunity to enhance the social, economic, and environmental conditions in this community. DNER encourages the organization to maintain an open communication with federal and state agencies and to request any support needed.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Edwin O. Malavet-Santiago, Environmental Emergencies Response Area Manager, at (787) 999-2200 ext. 5900, 5901 or by email at edwin.malavet@drna.pr.gov.

Cordially,


Anaís Rodríguez Vega
Secretary

EMS/MAG *ems*

C Teresita Rodríguez, USEPA
Dra. Gloria Bonilla-Santiago, LEAP Enterprise Inc.

1 Project Area Description & Plans for Revitalization, a. Target Area & Brownfields, i. Overview of Brownfield Challenges & Description of Target Area: LEAP Social Enterprise, Inc. (LEAP) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit based in the region of Rio Piedras in San Juan, Puerto Rico (PR). LEAP was established in PR after the 2018 Education Reform law #85 was passed, which provides authority to establish charter schools on the island. LEAP schools are tuition free and use Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics + Entrepreneurship (STEM+E) curriculum in a charter school environment, independently operated, that offer more flexibility than traditional public schools in exchange for increased accountability. Our goal is to obtain public and private financial assistance to reuse abandoned school properties to provide high-quality education, create sustainable jobs, and improved quality of life in eastern PR (east of PR52, approximately the eastern 1/4 of the island).

PR's economy was vibrant, in part, due to Section 936 (936 exemption) of the US tax code, which incentivized US companies to operate on the island through valuable tax exemptions. These incentives were eliminated in 2006, causing many companies to leave PR for more tax-friendly countries. PR's unstable economy coupled with natural disasters, a result of climate change, have contributed to the demise of eastern PR's commercial and residential vitality, driving the area into a deep recession that has lasted over a decade, leading to job losses and population decline as people left for the US mainland for employment. Many residents still feel the impacts of these losses. Hurricanes (Maria-2017 & Fiona-2022) severely impacted our target areas in the last 5 years, exacerbating extreme socioeconomic and financial pressures. Many hurricane damaged properties became brownfields, releasing chemicals like lead paint, petroleum, and other environmental hazards. The population sharply dropped by 14% after Maria (Center for PR Studies, City University of New York), and those who remain or have returned are fighting to recover what the past decade of loss has taken and are enduring a difficult job market with dozens of employers unable or unwilling to reopen. Fiona's (Sept. 2022) 33" of rain caused more flooding and loss to property owners. As government revenues declined or were reallocated, resources such as school funding were cut, resulting in many school closings (now brownfields), many of which were damaged during the storms and remain in disrepair today.

As businesses closed after the repeal of the 936 exemption and hurricanes, brownfields have become more prevalent. The worst-hit areas, where redevelopment investment has the greatest potential, are the Rio Piedras District (RP), the Carolina District (CD), and the PR-198 Corridor (Corridor), the target areas for this EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant. A focused effort has been made to invest in the target areas, creating detailed redevelopment plans to maximize investments and leverage additional funding. If properties outside target areas become high priority during the Cooperative Agreement (CA) period, we may invest grant funding on those as well; however, the redevelopment focus for this grant will remain the target areas.

The RP (portions of Census Tracts 54.02 & 55) is 0.25 mi² bound by C-14 St. to the north, Rafael Hernandez Marin Ave. to the south, Jose Abad St. to the east, and Paganini St. to the west in the San Juan metropolitan area, is a mixed commercial and residential area. The RP workforce decreased by 16.4% from 2017-2021. Those still working are earning significantly less. The Median Household Income (MHI) of RP residents is less than 1/3 of the US (US Census) (see 2.a.ii). Further, the per capita crime rate is 40X higher than in San Juan as a whole (PR Police Dept. [PRPD], 2022 crime stats). The RP was left in tatters after Maria. All power and drinking water services were damaged as were over 200 homes and 30% of commercial properties and schools, many of which closed (e.g. Gerardo S. Solá School) and are now brownfields.

The CD (portions of Census Tracts 505.04 & 601.04) is 1 mi² located between 1 Urb. Metropolis St. to the north, Grand de Loiza River to the south, PR-860 to the east, and PR-181 to the west. Primarily a residential area with some industrial and commercial, many CD residents are now forced to travel outside the target area to work as businesses and schools have closed due to the decade long recession and natural disasters. Students once walked to school, but after closure of the Juana A. Méndez School, many now travel to remote areas to attend school. Families with children, already burdened by financial stresses (poverty rate 30.2% compared to US at 12.8% - 2020 ACS), must now pay for busing or drive their children to schools, adding burden to already strained budgets. During hurricane Fiona, the Loiza River breached its banks causing catastrophic floods and damage to hundreds of properties.

The Corridor (portions of Census Tracts 5004.01 and 1806) follows PR-198 for 8 miles between Juncos to Humacao. School closures (e.g. Antonia Saez and Jose A López Schools) along the area created

a financial burden by forcing parents to enroll children in schools outside their communities. The MHI of Corridor residents is less than 1/4 the US (see 2.a.ii). When Maria hit, after power outages, water shortages, building damage, and loss of basic government services, many Corridor schools and businesses closed and never reopened, leaving derelict brownfield sites behind. Criminal activity has spiked in and around these brownfields with an estimated per capita crime rate of 39/1000 compared to 5/1000 in PR as a whole (PRPD Crime Incidents 2022).

The economic struggles we've faced in the past decade have brought brownfield challenges such as abandoned buildings, legacy pollution (Table 1), blight, increased crime, and strain on public resources, adding to the financial burdens (reduced income, increase poverty, lower tax revenue and wages, etc. – 2.a.i) and health disparities (higher cancer rates and infant mortality – 2.a.ii(2)) on target area residents. Our Revitalization Plans (1.b.) recognize the need for new, modern development in the target areas, especially schools. We were beginning to put the pieces in place to implement a strategy to create educational institutions that will serve as educational institutions and community centers while improving climate change resiliency (1.b.ii) which will balance social, educational, economic and environmental interests in an initiative to create sustainable, lasting development. Once our priority sites (Table 1) are redeveloped, they will serve as examples of success, triggering more investment. With the EPA's grant funding the initial high-risk due diligence investment on these sites, the likelihood of a successful redevelopment is much higher.

1.a.ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): The target areas have a significantly high concentration of brownfields (estimated 45), with the priority sites, environmental issues, and potential health effects listed in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1 Priority Sites, Size, Location, & Proximity to Target Area Residents	Historic Use / Current Use & Condition / Planned Reuse (further discussed in Section 1.b.i.)	Suspected Contaminants*
Gerardo S. Solá School – PR 3, 2 acres, adjoins low income & minority neighborhood	Former School / Vacant, deteriorating structure Reuse plan: charter school and community center with solar & stormwater mgmt.	Asbestos, lead paint, metals, PCBs, petroleum
LEAP Sabana Llana – PR-3, 3.29 acres, empty lot, adjoins low income & minority neighborhood	Former sports field / Vacant, no structure / Reuse plan: charter school and community center with solar & stormwater mgmt.	Asbestos, lead paint, metals, PCBs, petroleum
Juana A. Méndez School – Calle 1 Urb. Metropolis, 2 acres, adjoins low income & minority neighborhood	Former School / Vacant, hurricane damaged, reusable structure / Reuse plan: charter school & community center with solar & stormwater mgmt.	Metals, lead paint, PCBs, asbestos, petroleum
Antonia Saez School – PR-198, 0.67 acres, adjoins urban center, low income & minority neighborhood	Former School / Vacant, hurricane damage, reusable structure / Reuse plan: charter school and community center with solar & stormwater mgmt.	Asbestos, lead paint, metals, PCBs, petroleum
José A. López School – PR-933 – Calle Algarín, 6 acres, adjoins low income & minority neighborhood	Former School / Vacant, damaged from hurricane, reusable structure / Reuse plan: charter school and community center with solar & stormwater mgmt.	Asbestos, lead paint, metals, PCBs, petroleum
*The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), identifies these contaminants as threats to human health. Health threats include: skin damage, liver, kidneys, heart, spleen, nervous, respiratory, hormonal, blood, and immune systems, and may also cause neurological damage, birth defects and cancer (www.atsdr.cdc.gov).		

These priority sites meet the immediate needs in our community, align with redevelopment plans, and reuse is imminent due to **\$5M that has already been secured** by LEAP to redevelop priority sites into schools/community centers in target areas (1.c.i). A redevelopment plan has already been prepared for these priority sites (1.b.i). For example, reuse of the Juana A Mendez School will return an educational option back into the area community, saving transportation costs for families. A workforce development and resiliency center will provide residents access to solar energy, water, telecommunications, and job training/placement services, while serving as a storm shelter during hurricanes. Each site will also include a health center to serve the basic medical needs of both students and the community. This reuse strategy will be repeated on each of the priority sites in Table 1.

1.b. Revitalization of the Target Area, i. Reuse Strategy & Alignment with Revitalization Plans: LEAP's Revitalization Plans (PR Integrated Development Plan 2020 and San Juan Territorial Planning (Law 107-2021:Art. 6.013 Community Meeting #7) outlines an economic growth and development plan in target areas that calls for creating grassroots resources for education, job training, new jobs, civic resilience, and community centers. Reuse of target area brownfields will help achieve these goals through focused brownfield redevelopment. By creating new charter schools, not only will high quality

education be provided in areas where it is needed most, but additional benefits such as community centers serving residents of all ages, climate change resilience (solar power and flood mitigation through stormwater management), job training and placement services, new jobs, etc. will be created.

LEAP is requesting \$500,000, most of which will be used for Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs), providing the initial, highest risk investment necessary for brownfields reuse. This approach will trigger further environmental and redevelopment work with other funding as noted in 1.c.i. For example, a new building will be constructed on the Gerardo S. Solá as the current structure is badly damaged by hurricanes and will be demolished. The new building will be a state-of-the-art facility capable of withstanding hurricane winds and able to provide area residents with basic resources (e.g. food, water, clothing) and services (solar, telecommunications, water) during an emergency. In addition to providing a high-quality STEM+E education to students, the site will be used as a community center, providing workforce development training based on area industry needs. Once revitalized, the target area school shortage will be alleviated and new employment opportunities for residents will be created, aligning with reuse goals. Reuse of the Juana A. Méndez, Antonia Sáez, and José A. López schools will add educational and community space while improving our resiliency by integrating renewable energy and stormwater management features. Revitalization of priority sites will create needed jobs, free education for both children and adults, and greenspace in our target areas, improving quality of life and advancing the land use goals in our Revitalization Plans. Significant resources have already been pledged for the reuse of priority sites (1.c.i), and with EPA funds to cover environmental assessment and planning costs, we will realize the outcomes and benefits outlined below.

1.b.ii Outcomes & Benefits of Reuse Strategy: Redevelopment of priority sites will add an estimated 250 construction jobs and 500 permanent jobs. Each school will educate 780 students per year using STEAM+E methodologies. Additionally, a health and wellness clinic, a workforce development center, a fabrication laboratory for entrepreneurial education and industry, and youth career training center will benefit students and residents. The process will be duplicated each priority site, strengthening the academic and economic core, improving the wellbeing of community residents.

Assessment, remediation, and reuse of priority sites such as Gerardo S. Solá, Juana A. Méndez, Antonia Sáez, and José A. López schools will reduce environmental threats (asbestos, lead paint, metals, PCBs, petroleum, contaminants from septic systems), blight, and crime, boosting private investment in surrounding properties. Revitalization along existing infrastructure and successful redevelopment outcomes will create equitable education for all generations, improve the economic competitiveness of our target areas, leverage reuse investments, and restore healthy, safe, and walkable target areas where a significant number of low-income, minority, and sensitive populations reside, therefore improving our environmental justice goals.

Redevelopment will be consistent with the Puerto Rico “Renewable Energy Act” (Act 82, 2010) for stimulating the development of renewable energy and the Net Metering Program (Act No. 103, 2012), incentivizing the use of green energy infrastructure. New, energy efficient construction on priority sites, including the use of solar and LEED certification, will reduce energy usage and operating cost on sites where new construction is planned. All benefits realized by the redevelopment noted above will be tracked and reported in ACRES (see 3.c). Flooding caused by recent natural disasters has heightened our awareness of needed flood mitigation measures. Integration of bioswales, water diversion/harvesting, and infiltration trenches in reuse design will protect new investment in our community from the impacts of flooding induced by change. These measures combined with building codes integrating renewable energy use will better prepare us for future natural disasters. Addressing priority sites as described above will create free education and sustainable infrastructure, workforce capacity & development (new jobs), and remediate/reduce legacy pollution in areas with high concentrations of minorities and low-income residents. **EPA’s brownfields investment through LEAP will help meet Justice40 goals by generating energy efficient buildings, creating sustainable community development, reducing carbon emissions through the creation of greenspace and enhanced walkability, and turning idled brownfields into new hubs for our growing economy. Justice to disadvantaged residents (low-income, high poverty, distressed neighborhoods, disproportionate exposure to environmental impacts from brownfields) will be conveyed from these accomplishments.** It is not anticipated that redevelopment of target area sites will displace residents and businesses. Reuse plans will include competitive-wage job creation and attract additional investment in communities through commercial

development. Residents will be involved in the planning through community engagement events, where their input into the design and reuse of brownfields will be sought.

1.c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources, i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: LEAP has a history of leveraging investments in projects within the community. **For example, LEAP will commit \$1M to redevelop a charter school on the former Gerardo S. Solá site once risk of the environmental unknowns is eliminated. Additionally, since 2020, LEAP has received nearly \$300K from the Walton Foundation to invest in our priority sites (Table 1). An additional \$4M is committed to reuse of other priority sites.** LEAP is also eligible for and will seek additional funding from the following sources that support anticipated assessment, cleanup, infrastructure, and redevelopment: EPA Brownfield Clean-up and Multipurpose grant funds (\$2M/\$800K), US Dept. of Education Charter School Program (\$1.5M), US Dept. of Agriculture Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants (\$300K grants/\$1M in loans for community and economic development aid), Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), CDBG-DR (Disaster Relief) of which over \$7M is available for demolition, infrastructure, and economic development of brownfields, Federal Emergency Mgmt. Agency (FEMA) (\$2M available for hurricane-related clean-up and redevelopment), US Economic Development Administration (USEDA), Dept. of Transportation (DOT) grants, and new funding opportunities/incentives available in the future. Funding from these resources is available for remediation, demolition, site development, infrastructure improvements, streetscape improvements, building rehabilitation, job training, etc., to encourage and complete our reuse strategies. Should EPA funds be awarded for environmental assessment, the EPA grant may qualify as required match to LEAP and other funding discussed above, further leveraging resources for brownfields redevelopment.

Using EPA funding for the initial high-risk environmental assessment of these sites, brownfield redevelopment will be successful. We will also seek funds from the Puerto Rico Economic Incentives Act, which will be used to encourage investment and development of commercial businesses as planned for some of our priority brownfields. As properties are assessed, it will stimulate partnerships with many agencies (U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), FEMA, PR Dept. of Housing, PR Dept. of Economic Dev. & Commerce, etc.) to fill funding gaps such as demolition funding and reuse incentives, ensuring successful redevelopment. A detailed funding plan will be developed based on individual status and eligibility for each brownfield site or area as assessment projects are realized. Other funding noted above will also be sought as it becomes available. These funds coupled with the EPA Assessment Grant will enable us to realize and document revitalization success within the next 2-4 years.

1.c.ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: Our Revitalization Plan's land use goals emphasize infill reuse and rehab before additional land is considered for development. The redeveloped infrastructure will serve as a 21st century hub for environmental sustainability and resilient emergency response, with facilities that are solar powered with backup batteries to provide uninterrupted electrical services and charging stations for use during emergencies. Additional modern utility infrastructure is available to the priority sites and in the target areas (3-phase electric, natural gas, city water and sewer, telephone, and fiber optic service), providing connectivity to new development. Infrastructure damaged by hurricanes has since been repaired and is robust enough to handle the added capacity required by planned reuses and will utilize existing services and other infrastructure (roads, curb cuts, on/off-street parking, & nearby utilities), reducing site reuse costs. With revitalization ranging from residential to industrial, existing infrastructure will allow for easy access for commercial/industrial development, enabling residents the opportunity to attend school, work, and live in the same neighborhood, creating a walkable community. If needed, additional funding for roads, trails, or other infrastructure necessary for planned reuse will be sought from the US DOT Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant program, the recently enacted Infrastructure and Jobs Act, local funds (when available), and CDBG funds. In times of emergency, the school will double as a refuge area for surrounding communities providing neighbors with shelter and services during flooding, hurricanes, and seismic disasters.

2. Community Need & Community Engagement, a. Community Need, i. The Community's Need for Funding: LEAP does not have the funds for site assessment in its budget. The only available resource to address brownfield assessments is federal funding. Our communities are low income, with **39.6% (RP), 30.5% (CD), and 47.3% (Corridor) of residents falling below the poverty line and MHI significantly lower than the US (2.a.ii.)**, making investment in our brownfields an impossibility. Brownfield sites add to the financial burden borne by residents, suppressing residential property values,

and adding to municipal expenditures through reduced tax base and additional public safety services to brownfield sites for criminal activity as indicated by the high concentration of crime in target areas. Because of the decade long, island wide recession, the territorial government has no resources to commit to brownfields reuse. Moreover, local governments in PR do not have funding resources commonly available on the mainland (e.g. Tax Increment Financing), so incentivizing reuse through payment of environmental due diligence is attractive to developers, but we have no tools available at a local or Commonwealth level. Since 2007, Puerto Rico's Dept. of Education has closed over 650 schools (nearly 50%) on the island. An estimated 150 have closed in eastern PR. This dramatic decline was worsened by the island's financial crisis and subsequent hurricanes. Charter schools are the best resource available to reverse this trend, but funding is needed from the EPA Brownfields Grant program to assess properties and trigger further investment and reuse.

2.a.ii. Threats to Sensitive Population, (1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: For decades, our communities have suffered extraordinarily low wages and a very high poverty rate. The devastation left by recent climate change induced natural disasters added unprecedented financial burdens to our already poor residents through storm damage costs, loss of work, loss of basic necessities, and very slow recovery. According to the 2020 ACS, the MHI in target areas ranges from \$14,749 to \$28,994 compared to the US at \$64,994. School closures during 2018 relocated over 3,000 of our students to locations outside target areas forcing parents to find transport for their children to attend school, thus adding more strain to household expenses. Our communities have very high proportion of minorities. This is even more evident in target areas, where nearly 100% of the population is minority. Other sensitive populations, such as children and the elderly (39% of the CD population – 2020 ACS) are also impacted. School closures and contaminated brownfields place vulnerable populations such as children at risk, and contaminant pathways from brownfields (e.g. vapor intrusion, groundwater and surface water used for drinking, irrigation, etc., and surface soil exposure) are a threat to area residents. For example, all Table 1 brownfields, located in low-income, minority neighborhoods, are potentially impacted with Metals, lead paint, PCBs, asbestos, petroleum, and other contaminants known to cause various cancers and low birth weight, which are experienced by target area residents at a higher rate than the nation (see 2.a.ii(2)). The proximity of brownfields to low-income neighborhoods in our target area drives down housing values, suppresses commercial investment, and limits residents' access to adequate employment, resulting in a distinct disadvantage to target area residents with no real relief in sight, if nothing changes.

This grant will help better inform us of the environmental conditions at our brownfields. By considering impacts on neighboring properties when developing reuse plans, the risk of exposure will be reduced, sources of contamination will be eliminated, the ecological health of our community will be improved, and livability and equitable development principles will be incorporated.

2.a.ii(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease & Adverse Health Conditions: School sites such as Gerardo S. Solá, Juana A. Méndez, Antonia Sáez, and José A. López are impacted by asbestos. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) suggests the effects of exposure to asbestos, a chemical of concern at priority sites, be can linked to higher incidences of lung cancer which in Río Piedras, the location of the RP target area is 29% higher than PR (PR Cancer Registry). Similarly, the Liver and Biliary Cancers are 20% higher than PR. Bone cancer in the Caguas Health Region (location of the Corridor) is 32% higher than in PR. Exposure to VOCs has been linked to leukemia, incidents of which have increased 12% from 2010-2017 in Río Piedras, the highest increase recorded in PR. Moreover, PCBs, lead, and other metals, as well as VOCs, PAHs, and petroleum constituents are believed to be present on priority sites. These are known to be a threat to unborn children and infants, and the low-birth-weight rate in Río Piedras is 32% higher than the US according to the CDC and the PR Dept. of Health. Although some health stats are not available at the municipality or target area level, this data is representative of target areas. Each of these contaminants can be found on one or more of the priority sites, and every priority site adjoins low-income and minority neighborhoods potentially directly linking adverse health conditions to underserved populations.

Currently, there are 254 properties within our target areas that have environmental records in the EPA's EnviroFacts database. All priority sites were built prior to 1979, and older buildings have a greater risk for high lead levels from paint. Because of the presence of toxic chemicals and their inevitable impact on the environment near residents adding to their environmental threat. **Removal of environmental contaminants at brownfields in our community will reduce exposure to our residents, which will**

help to reduce the greater than normal incidences of disease and other poor health outcomes that our environmentally overburdened target areas currently experience.

2.a.ii(3) Promoting Environmental Justice: The public health impact from target area brownfields and industrial operations, and their proximity to impoverished and minority residents has disproportionately exposed them to environmental pollutants, resulting in poor health and wellbeing. EPA's EJScreen tool indicates that Corridor residents are in the 92nd percentile for lead paint exposure and 90-98th percentile for hazardous waste proximity. Similarly, RP residents are in the 84th percentile for lead paint exposure, and both the RP and CD residents are in the 99th percentile for wastewater discharge compared to PR as a whole. Our brownfield assessment, cleanup, and reuse strategy will improve the welfare of our residents by eliminating the health risk they pose. The EPA grant will play an important role in this, reducing threats by funding environmental investigations needed to trigger stalled cleanup and end disinvestment in our target areas. **Health indicators such as increased cancer and low birth weight (2.a.ii(2)) will no longer be influenced by environmental impacts caused by target area brownfields. This will be accomplished in areas where the disadvantaged, such as low income and minority populations are highly concentrated, supporting environmental justice goals.** Redevelopment of schools will increase jobs, improve educational attainment, and provide job training, which will create gainful employment for residents, reduce unemployment and poverty, increase household income, and improve education for the less fortunate. Job creation will attract new residents and eliminate population loss. The Gerardo S. Solá school reuse plan, when complete, will educate over 750 children each year. Workforce programs and after school services will educate over 200 adults which will be trained in different trades. Other improvements such as the Fabrication Lab will host 100 young adult entrepreneurs to explore opportunities in trade and export, among other industries. Other federal programs (e.g., CDBG) to fund lead paint abatement and other residential improvements will be used. Increased employment, higher wages, and new development on brownfield properties will create a sense of pride and ownership of the community, incentivizing further investment and increasing property values. As wages increase, new tax revenue will be generated and reinvested in the community, multiplying investment in the target areas. EPA grant funding will help stimulate investment in brownfields by funding environmental due diligence, a common stumbling block for land recycling in our community, improving the economic status and health of residents near brownfields.

2.b. Community Engagement, i. Project Involvement & ii. Project Roles: The community partners and organizations that will support this effort are best suited to engage at a grass roots level. They also have regional influence and local ties, maximizing the benefits they bring to the project. A brownfield committee is being assembled from these and other entities, including members of the public, to provide input into the inventory and site prioritization, reuse plans, economic development, and community engagement efforts, among others. The committee will meet 2-4 times/year.

Table 2 – Project Roles

Org. Name	Point of Contact	Description and Project Roles
Residentes de Parcelas Falú	Jorge Luis Ayala (787) 548-5028	Grassroots, local community organization representing target area residents who will help engage with residents/stakeholders & provide reuse design input.
PR Department of Education	Eliezer Ramos ramospr@de.pr.gov	Provides oversight of charter schools. They will provide input & approval for reuse plans & academic, operational & financial policies, & help identify additional sites.
San Juan Office of the Mayor	Miguel Romero Lugo (787) 480-2106 mromero@sanjuan.pr	Govt. entity that provides access to the RP & CD priority sites who will provide incentives & tax exemptions to facilitate priority site redevelopment, cleanup & reuse input, & aid with community engagement.
Centro para Puerto Rico	Luis Gautier Lloveras lgautier@centroparapuertorico.org	Nonprofit org. who will provide programmatic support & capacity building for the planned redevelopment by identifying funding gaps & resources.
Sagrado Corazón University	Dennis Román Dennis.roman@sagrado.edu	Higher Ed institution who will provide college credits to students, ensuring success of the schools once redevelopment is complete and host engagement meetings.
CEBDI – Departamento de Vivienda	Yariz A. Ríos Portela Yrios@vivienda.pr.gov	Provide assistance & guidance to transfer ownership of sites to LEAP once environmental work is complete. They will provide input on cleanup plans & reuse strategies.

2.b.iii. Incorporating Community Input: LEAP has a well-established community involvement program that we will maintain for this grant. **A total of 8-12 public meetings will be held during the 4-year grant** to maintain stakeholder engagement and continue to gather input on site selection, prioritization, assessment needs, cleanup decisions, mitigation measures from the cleanup and

redevelopment activity, and reuse planning. In Addition, 2-4 brownfield committee meetings will be held each year. Outreach events, open to the public, will be advertised through municipal and partner websites, newspapers, radio, and social media (earned media and other low-cost/no-cost, or in-kind methods) ensuring that the entire community has an opportunity to provide input. When social distancing or other restrictions limit in-person community meetings due to COVID-19 or other causes, we will follow existing recommendations/guidance including EPA's Office of Land and Emergency Management *Socially Distant Engagement Ideas for EPA Brownfield Grant Applicants* that discusses Virtual Tools (online meeting platforms, social media, QR codes, web page or email updates, etc.) and Non-Digital Approaches (phone or conference calls, flyers, newspaper ads, local TV, and radio, etc.). The community will be updated on progress throughout the grant, as well as share input through comment opportunities on municipal and partner websites. For residents with limited internet or cellular network access, paper surveys will be available at local businesses, enabling community input without access to digital resources. Because we have a large non-English speaking population, LEAP has multi-lingual staff to interpret presentations and translate documents in Spanish and English. We have already begun engaging target area residents, business owners, and community advocates to solicit their input regarding our brownfield project and will continue to do so during the grant period. A public meeting will be held in the second quarter of the grant period to discuss goals, planned activities, and a schedule for future community involvement. For subsequent meetings, personal invitations will be sent to residents directly impacted by priority sites, neighborhood groups, lenders, area businesses, and developers to maximize stakeholder engagement. LEAP's staff will catalog stakeholder input for reference when determining assessment and redevelopment priorities. As the project progresses, we will involve stakeholders in the decision-making process regarding prioritization, assessment, site marketing, cleanup planning, and feedback on reuse. When stakeholder input is received, LEAP will evaluate it against our development goals and available resources, adopting feedback that feasibly meets these criteria.

3. Task Descriptions, Cost Estimates, & Measuring Progress, a. Description of Tasks/Activities & Outputs: LEAP will begin activities immediately upon award confirmation, working to prepare a Work Plan approved by the EPA PM/PO. No subawards or participant support costs are planned. After the Cooperative Agreement period begins, LEAP and its QEP will complete the following tasks:

Task/Activity 1: Program Management, Training Support, Brownfield Inventory/Prioritization

i. *Project Implementation:* LEAP staff will travel to the Puerto Rico Brownfields Week and the National Brownfields Conference, participate in calls, meetings, and correspondence between the LEAP, QEP, EPA, etc. to manage the grant's Cooperative Agreement. 8-12 public meetings to update communities on the brownfield assessment progress and seek public input and involvement; supplies: printed flyers, advertising, postage, etc. We will complete Quarterly, DBE, Annual reports, and ACRES database entries, and will carefully track contractor costs, comparing to the budget, expenditures, project progress, and milestones to ensure the timely expenditure of grant funds within the prescribed 4-year project period. LEAP, with QEP support, will continue to develop a brownfield inventory and will use it as a tool to help accomplish brownfield reuse goals. Inventoried sites will be prioritized based on the following criteria, in no order: 1) reuse potential, 2) potential for environmental or human health impact and environmental justice, and 3) community input.

ii. *Identifying Additional Sites:* Additional sites will be identified by LEAP, community leaders, local governments, project partners, and through community outreach. Priority will be granted to sites within areas identified as disadvantaged by the CEJST and to sites near residential areas that pose health risks to underserved communities. Priority will also be considered for sites that have a higher chance of redevelopment and a greater economic impact potential within our target areas.

iii. *Schedule:* QEP will be selected through a competitive bidding process (compliant with federal procurement regulations - 2 CFR 200.317 - 200.326) before Cooperative Agreement period begins; correspondence will occur at least monthly (more frequently as specific project activities require) throughout the grant period; update and prioritize brownfield inventory the first 2 quarters, then as necessary for the remainder of the grant period; ACRES updates will be conducted at least quarterly throughout the grant period.

iv. *Task/activity Leads:* LEAP & QEP

v. *Outputs:* Travel-Municipal staff to regional/national brownfields conferences/meetings; prioritized inventory; project performance reports: 16 Quarterly Reports, ACRES entries, 4 MBE/WBE reports, 4

annual reports, etc.; calls, meetings, and correspondence between the LEAP, QEP, EPA, etc. to manage the grant's Cooperative Agreement.

Task/Activity 2: Environmental Investigation

i. Project Implementation: Prior to applying for site eligibility, an access agreement will be prepared and executed for each site being considered. Eligibility determinations will be completed under this task, and the QEP will complete Phase I ESAs activities on sites selected by LEAP. All Phase I ESAs will be conducted in accordance with the applicable ASTM standard (E1527-21) and the All-Appropriate Inquiry (AAI) rule. Focus areas will include those already identified as listed priority sites (Table 1). The QEP will prepare a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) as well as Sampling & Analysis Plans (SAP) for EPA approval and Health & Safety Plans (HASP). Once approved, the QEP, directed by LEAP, will complete Phase II ESAs based on environmental conditions identified in the preceding Phase I ESAs.

ii. Identifying Additional Sites: See sections 3.a.ii in Tasks/Activities 1 and 4.

iii. Schedule: Obtain site access, request eligibility determinations & finalize site access to initial sites for investigation-early 2nd Quarter of Grant period; Begin Phase I ESAs-2nd Quarter of Grant period; Submit QAPP to EPA for review/approval; QAPP approval & Phase II ESAs begin-3rd Quarter of Grant period; all Phase I ESAs completed-end of 15th Quarter of Grant period; all Phase II ESAs completed, and final contractor invoices submitted-45 days before end of grant period.

iv. Task/activity Leads: LEAP & QEP

v. Outputs: 11 Phase I ESAs; QAPP and SAP/HASP; estimated 8-10 Phase II ESAs.

Task/Activity 3: Clean-up/Reuse Planning:

i. Project Implementation: The QEP, directed by the LEAP, will prepare site specific clean-up plans/documents, including Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives, remediation plans, site closure letter requests, and clean-up funding development (1.c.i).

ii. Identifying Additional Sites: See sections 3.a.ii in Tasks/Activities 1 and 4.

iii. Schedule: Prepared after Phase I and II ESAs are complete, contamination is present, and cleanup is even necessary. Task 3 activities will continue throughout the grant period.

iv. Task/activity Leads: LEAP & QEP

v. Outputs: 8 cleanup planning documents and 1-2 design charrette/visioning session(s).

Task/Activity 4: Community Outreach & Involvement:

i. Project Implementation: 8-12 public meetings will be held during the grant period to update the community on ESA progress and seek public input/involvement. Print and mail material for project/site information and marketing documents will also be funded under this task. The LEAP will complete this task, assisted by the QEP, who will manage the technical aspects of the community outreach program and will attend/participate in outreach events. Social media outlets and other online media will be developed/maintained, and outreach efforts will inform the public on the progress of investigation/cleanup planning activities and provide marketing resources for future development.

ii. Identifying Additional Sites: Additional sites will be identified during public community outreach meetings. These meetings will be focused on public engagement including what sites the community views as a priority for redevelopment. Priority will be granted to sites identified by underserved communities, especially when those sites are within areas identified as disadvantaged by the CEJST.

iii. Schedule: 2-4 brownfield committee meetings planned per year and 2-3 public meetings planned per year with the 1st planned for the 2nd Quarter of the grant period.

iv. Task/activity Leads: LEAP & QEP

v. Outputs: 8-12 public meetings to update the community on the brownfield assessment progress and seek public input and involvement; supplies: printed flyers, advertising, postage, etc.

We will work diligently to assure startup activities are completed per the tasks and schedule above. LEAP will allocate all grant funds to project properties before the final quarter of the grant period to assure that grant task activities are completed before the end of the 4-year CA contract. Because there is a high demand for assessments and site access has already been obtained for all of the priority sites in Table 1, it is likely that funds will be spent prior to the end date. We are proactively communicating with representatives of privately-owned brownfields to gain access and resolve issues in anticipation of this grant funding as well as non-grant funded assessment activities. Such communication initiates the process for eventual property transfer and redevelopment. These discussions create a positive dialog between property owners, local government, and impacted citizens.

3.b. Cost Estimates: We will allocate \$383,800 to Phase I and II ESAs (or 77% of total grant funding assigned to ESAs). The costs outlined in Table 3 were developed anticipating tasks necessary to efficiently identify, characterize, and plan for the remediation of the priority sites listed in Table 1.

Table 3 Budget	Budget Categories ¹	1. Program Mgmt, Training Support, Inv / Prioritization	2.Phase I / II ESAs	3. Clean-up / Reuse Planning	4. Community Outreach & Involvement	Budget Category Total
Direct Costs	Travel	\$4,000				\$4,000
	Supplies				\$400	\$400
	Personnel	\$25,000				\$25,000
	Contractual ²	\$21,000	\$383,800	\$55,000	\$10,800	\$470,600
TOTAL BUDGET		\$50,000	\$383,800	\$55,000	\$11,200	\$500,000

¹Table 3 only includes budget categories with costs. ²In accordance with Federal, State, and local procurement regulations.

Grant tasks will be completed at the anticipated unit costs with the following outputs/outcomes:

1. Program Management & Training Support, Inventory/Prioritization: \$50,000 – **Travel:** Attend National Brownfield Conf.: airfare x 2 @ \$1,400, 2 rooms, 3 nights lodging @ \$1,700, meals @ \$650, ground transportation @ \$250 = \$4,000, **Contractual:** total \$21,000, includes approximately 125 hrs. \$80/hr. = \$10,000 for inventory, & approximately 137.5 hours \$80/hr. = \$11,000 for program mgmt. **Personnel:** Administrative cost includes 500 hrs. \$50/hr. = \$25,000

2. Env. Investigation: \$383,800 – **Contractual:** 11 Phase I ESAs at an average cost of \$3,800 each = \$41,800, & 8-10 Phase II ESAs at an estimated cost of \$30,000-\$45,000 (depending on site complexity/environmental conditions) = \$342,000 (@ \$38,000 average cost). Though our budget will support 11 Phase I's and 8-10 Phase II ESAs, we understand that large sites may need more investment requiring us to realign the budget during the grant period. Areas of focus will include those already determined in the inventories as priority sites listed in 1.a.ii.

3. Clean-up & Reuse Planning: \$55,000 – **Contractual:** estimated 8 ABCAs/clean-up plans expected to cost \$5,000 each = \$40,000. 1-2 design charrette/visioning session(s) = \$15,000

4. Community Outreach & Involvement: \$11,200 – **Supplies:** printed flyers, advertising, grant fact sheets, outreach visual aids, advertising, postage, etc. = \$400, **Contractual:** approx. 135 hours at an estimated \$80/hr. = \$10,800.

3.c. Measuring Environmental Results: We will track, measure, and evaluate progress through meeting minutes, Quarterly and Annual Financial Reports, quarterly review/analysis of grant performance, ACRES entries, and completion of Work Plan tasks. If planned outputs/outcomes are not achieved or milestones/project schedule outlined in 3.a. are not being met, we will create a corrective action plan to identify deficiencies and make the appropriate adjustments necessary to achieve the anticipated outputs on schedule. Further, the Assessment Grant will have the following measurable outcomes: sites/acreage assessed, jobs created/retained, redevelopment complete, number of parcels, and leveraged monies. All statistics will be included in quarterly reports and ACRES submittals as data becomes available, which will allow the LEAP to better evaluate and highlight the grant program's progress and success. At grant closure, LEAP will provide a final report to the EPA and our communities summarizing project outputs and outcomes.

4. Programmatic Capability & Past Performance, a. Programmatic Capacity, i. Organizational Capacity, ii. Organizational Structure and iii. Description of Key Staff: LEAP's Department of Grant Administration (DGA) staff will manage this grant. This office has previously managed many other economic development resources valued at over \$20M in the past 5 years, including those listed in 4.b.ii(1). LEAP has the technical, financial, and administrative ability and capacity in place to implement this grant successfully. Dr. Gloria Bonilla-Santiago, LEAP's CEO and founder will serve as the Project Manager. Dr. Bonilla-Santiago holds a BBA, MA, and a Ph.D. in Public Policy and Administration. Dr. Bonilla-Santiago has extensive redevelopment and economic development experience as the Director of the Community Leadership Center from Rutgers University-Camden and Board Chair of the LEAP Academy University Charter School. She will leverage this experience to seek reuse opportunities for former schools turned brownfields without secured redevelopment. In the role of Board Chair, Dr. Bonilla-Santiago has managed many other funding resources similar to this project as outlined in 4.b. below. Ms. Erika Littles, current Associate Director of the Community Leadership Center at Rutgers University-Camden, will assist Dr. Bonilla-Santiago, especially with outreach activities. Currently, she works with Dr. Bonilla-Santiago as the Special Projects and Fundraising Director. Ms. Littles is an expert

in innovative academic settings, site reuse, and community engagement, and will use her experience to make this project a success. Ms. Brenda Rivera, LEAP's Chief Financial Officer will serve as the Fiscal Coordinator and will handle the day-to-day financial responsibilities and oversee/manage the budget. Ms. Rivera has been with LEAP for 5 years, has been integral to the success of many other funded programs in which LEAP has participated, including those listed in 4.b.ii(1), and she has extensive experience managing grant activities for LEAP. Ms. Rivera will leverage this experience to ensure that all financial requirements of the project are completed accurately and on time. All staff assigned to this project have worked for LEAP for at least 5 years. Our workforce is stable with little staff turnover and has the capacity to effectively manage this grant.

4.a.iv. Acquiring Additional Resources: LEAP's staff has a history of working cooperatively with state and federal agencies, other non-profits, and community partners to leverage additional resources when needed. Through a competitive bidding/procurement process, we will select a QEP according to federal procurement regulations (2 CFR 200.317 through 200.326) and with experience with EPA Brownfields Grants and working with the PR Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER). The team and execution plan outlined above will ensure timely and successful expenditure of funds within the prescribed 4-year project period. This team will be supported by partners who will provide the financial, engineering, consulting, and the legal support needed to make this project a success. As appropriate, we will utilize visioning sessions and other assistance/advice offered by the Technical Assistance for Brownfields (Region 2 TAB program) to maximize the incorporation of community input.

4.b. Past Performance & Accomplishments, ii. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Assistance Agreements, (1) Purpose & Accomplishments: LEAP has not received an EPA Brownfields grant; however, we have received relevant federal/non-federal assistance agreements. Table 4 lists some assistance received in the past 5 years. LEAP has established a track record in grantsmanship and fundraising. It secured a federal grant through the U.S. Department of Education for Charter School Planning and Start up in the amount of \$1,500,000 which provided early operational dollars to open the charter school in Puerto Rico-the LEAP STEAM + E Academy of San Juan. The Walton Foundation also provided early planning funding in the amount of \$300,000, which was used for early planning support. LEAP also secured an allocation through the US Connectivity Fund (E-Rate) in the amount of \$237,000 to support technology needs during COVID. This grant provided funds to order laptops for every student at the school so they could engage in virtual learning from home. LEAP contributors mission is to increase PR's presence in global economy, and provide better tools for improving education by using targeted economic development and resilience programs to partner with community groups, providing resources, training, funding, and networks that improve the local economy.

Table 4

Awarding Agency	Project	\$ Received	Accomplishments/Outputs/Outcomes/Measures of Success
US Department of Education	STEM+E Charter School Planning & Start-up	\$1.5M	Funded initial operational funds to open the first LEAP charter school in San Juan, PR where 270 students are educated.
Walton Family Foundation – PR Education Foundation Corp	STEAM+E Charter School Launch	\$300,000	Funded planning and organization costs associated with opening the first LEAP charter school in San Juan, PR enabling LEAP to open one charter school.
Federal Communications Commission Emergency Connectivity Fund	E-Rate Program	\$237,000	Provided 290 laptop computers for students to use during COVID-19 to attend school & complete work virtually.

4.b.ii(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: All funding assistance agreement terms and conditions were met for the above-mentioned projects, including: reporting number of students served in E-rate Program, establishing LEAP as a 501(c)(3), selecting staff, and expanded the services LEAP provides in the community. **All goals, outputs, and outcomes (indicated in Table 4) in the workplans of the previous grants were achieved, and reports discussed were completed in a timely manner.** Because goals, outputs, and outcomes were met without incident, no corrective measures were necessary or taken. LEAP was fully compliant with the terms and conditions of these grant programs and follows all reporting and performance protocols.

III.B. Threshold Criteria for Assessment Grants

III.B.1 Applicant Eligibility

LEAP Social Enterprise, Inc. (LEAP) (applicant) is a non-profit organization with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status (documentation attached). The applicant is therefore eligible to apply for and receive U.S. EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant funding.

III.B.2 Community Involvement

Involving our community and soliciting feedback regarding Brownfields activities and redevelopment plans are essential to our community's Brownfields program's success. Communication is a two-way process, and our ultimate goal is to keep the community informed and involved so they remain aware of potential concerns, questions and solutions. 8 to 12 outreach events (2-3 per yr.) will be held throughout the grant period to maintain stakeholder engagement and continue to gather public input on site selection and prioritization, assessment needs, cleanup decisions, mitigation measures from cleanup/redevelopment activity, and reuse planning. Outreach events, open to the general public, will be advertised through municipal and partner websites, local papers, radio, and social media platforms (earned media and other low-cost, no-cost or in-kind methods) ensuring that the entire community has an opportunity to provide input. When social distancing or other restrictions limit in-person community meetings due to COVID-19 or other causes, we will follow existing recommendations/guidance including EPA's Office of Land and Emergency Management *Socially Distant Engagement Ideas for EPA Brownfield Grant Applicants* that discusses Virtual Tools (online meeting platforms, social media, QR codes, web page or email updates, etc.) and Non-Digital Approaches (phone or conference calls, flyers, newspaper ads, local TV, and radio, etc.). See Section IV.E.2.b. of the Narrative/Ranking Criteria for further information.

III.B.3 Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

This criterion is not applicable as LEAP is not a current EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant recipient.

III.B.4 Contractors and Named Subrecipients

LEAP has not procured/named any contractors or subrecipients.