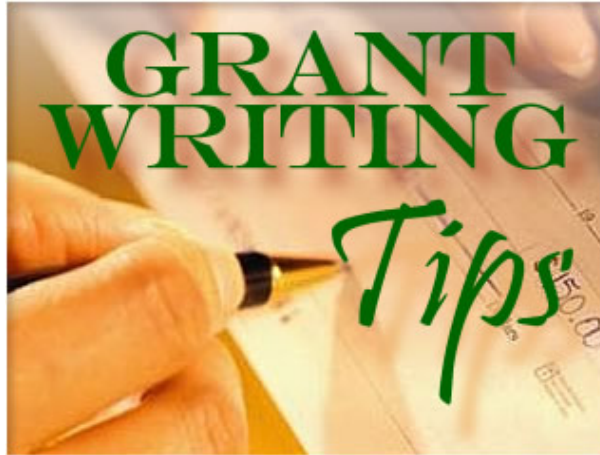


Grant Writing Tips & Tricks



**Sean Vroom
NJIT TAB**

**Felicia Fred
USEPA Region 3, Brownfields**

**Salem, VA
October 2, 2019**

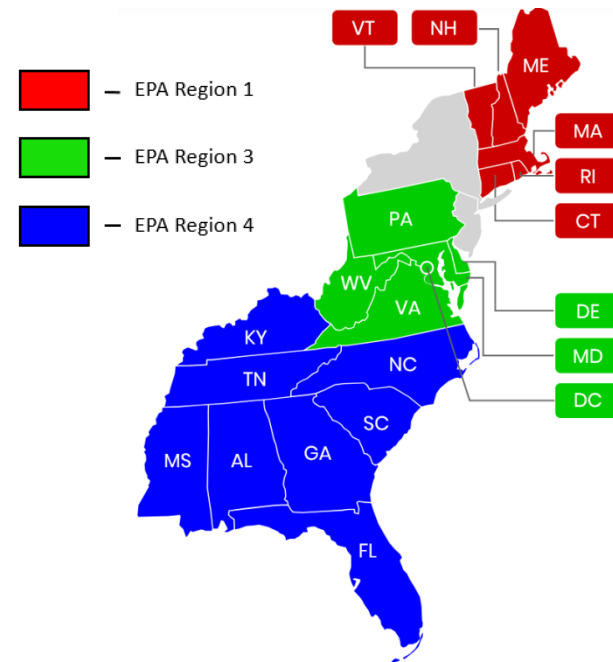
Grant Writing Tips & Tricks

Bootcamp Objectives:

- Expose participants to the NJIT TAB program
- Participants will gain a basic understanding of the EPA Brownfield Grants
- Participants will gain insight into how to write a great brownfields grant proposal
- Provide hands on experience for grant writing

What is TAB?

- a technical assistance program, funded through a cooperative agreement with the USEPA
- serve as independent resource to: local, county, state, regional, and tribal governments; and nonprofits attempting to cleanup and reclaim brownfields
- Regions 1, 3, and 4
- Assistance is **FREE** of charge!



Who is the NJIT TAB Team?



NJIT TAB

NJIT TAB provides assistance throughout the *entire* brownfields redevelopment process.

Assistance is provided through...

- ❖ Resource Center
- ❖ Educational Forums
- ❖ Direct Technical Assistance

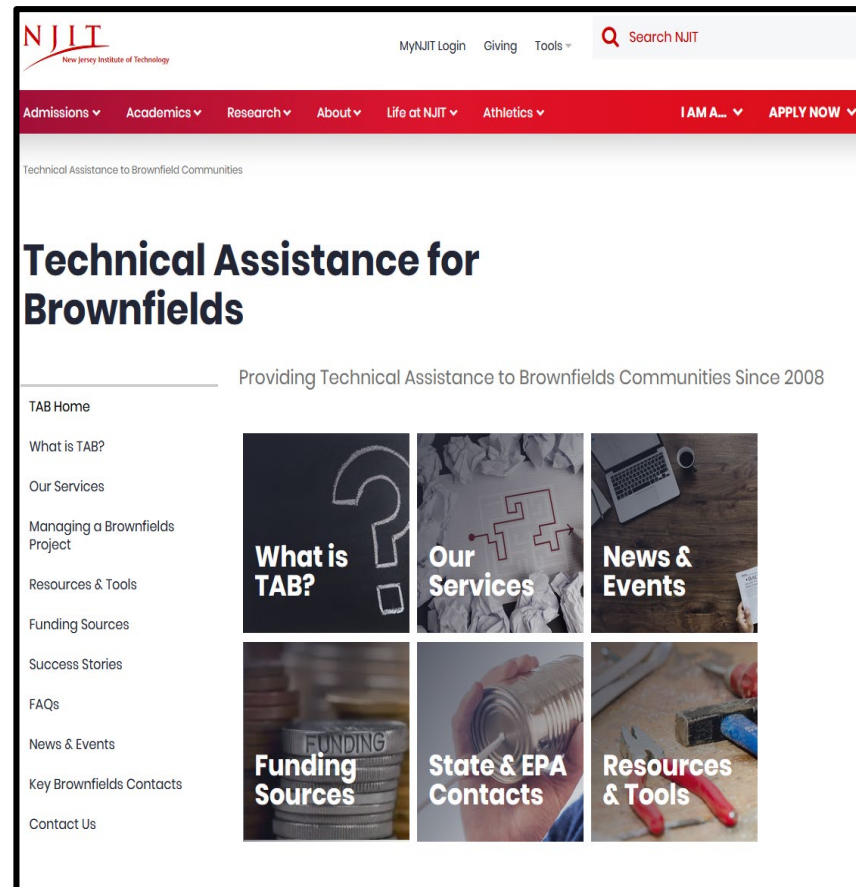


Resource Center

www.njit.edu/tab

Resources and Tools:

- info on managing a brownfields project
- news and upcoming events
- Federal and state funding sources
- key state and EPA contacts
- previously recorded webinars
- suite of tools
- downloads of workshop and seminar presentations
- sample RFPs
- how-to videos



Educational Forums

Conferences: pre-conference workshops, learning labs, panel sessions, office hours

Workshops: 2 to 4 hour interactive sessions on brownfield related topics

Seminars: deeper dive into specific brownfield related topics

Brownfield Boot Camps: more intensive, deep dive into specific brownfield related topics

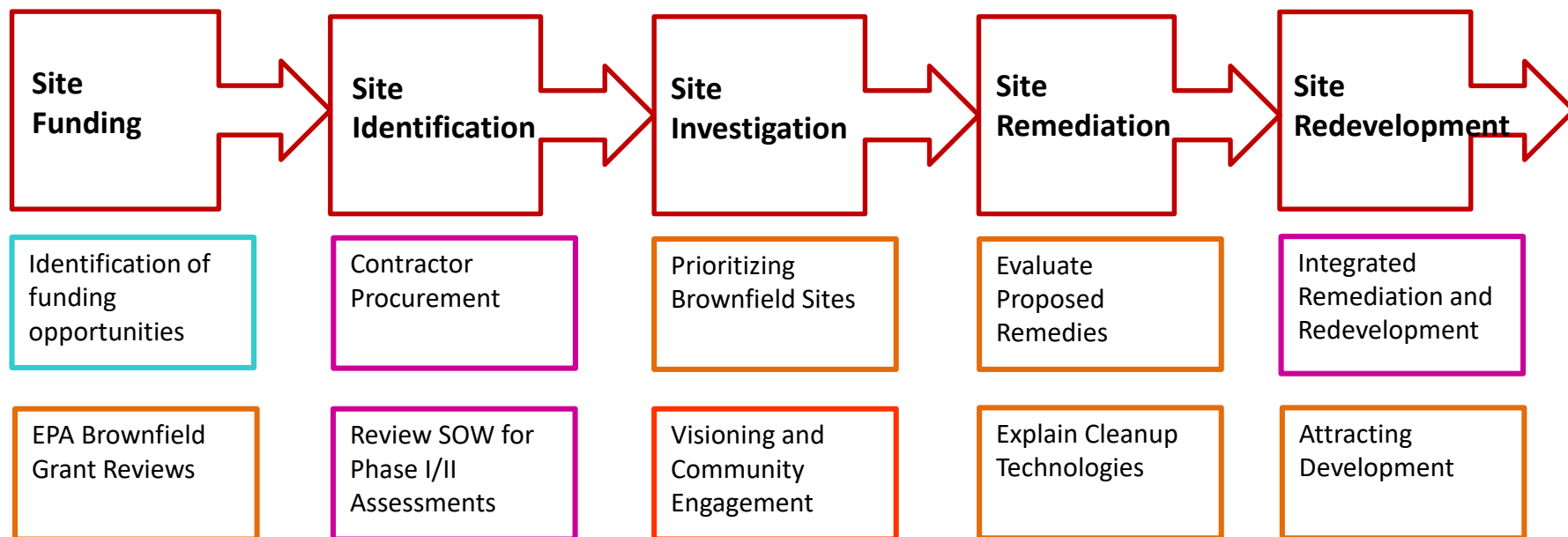
Webinars: range from introducing the TAB program to specific brownfield topics



Direct Technical Assistance

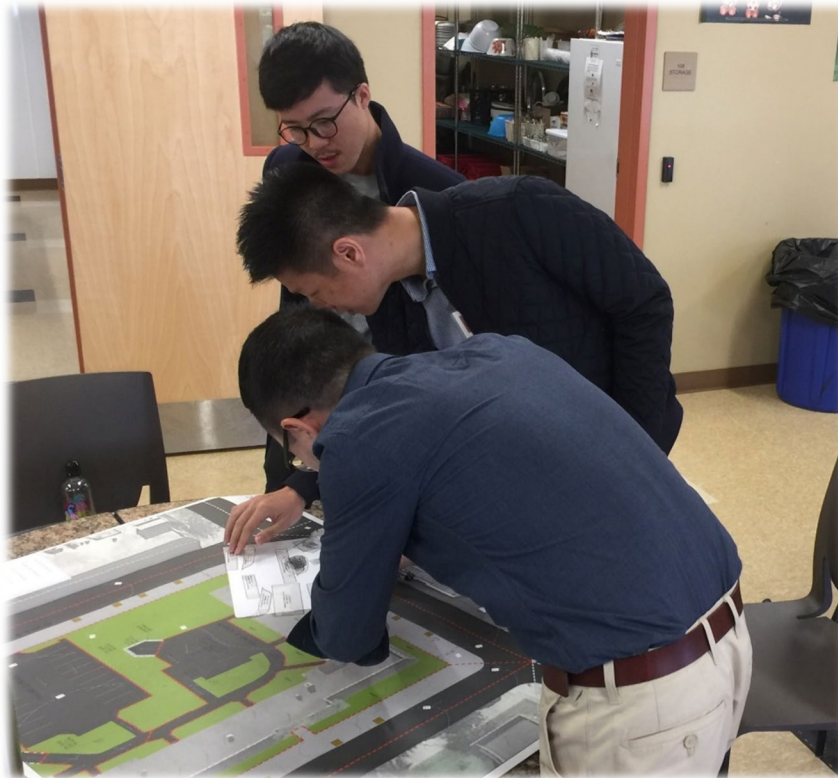


Brownfields Redevelopment Spectrum



Every community is different and every community's needs are different. The type and depth of assistance NJIT TAB provides is tailored to the needs of the community – from a quick call to more involvement.

Direct Technical Assistance



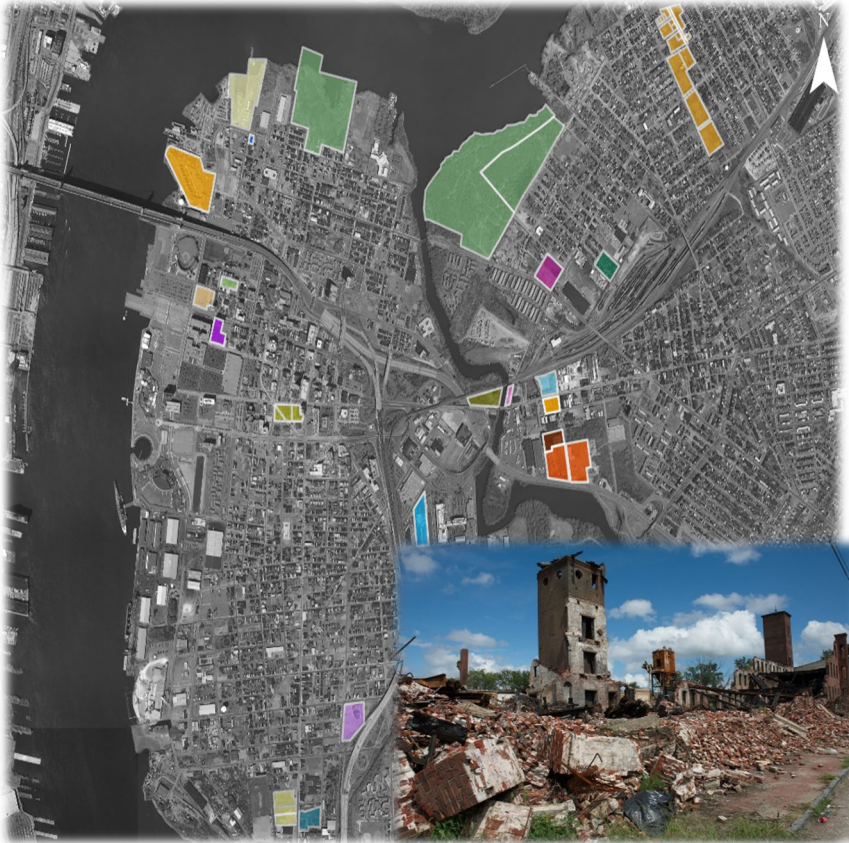
➤ Community Engagement

- Visioning
- Assets and Needs
- Environmental Justice



Direct Technical Assistance

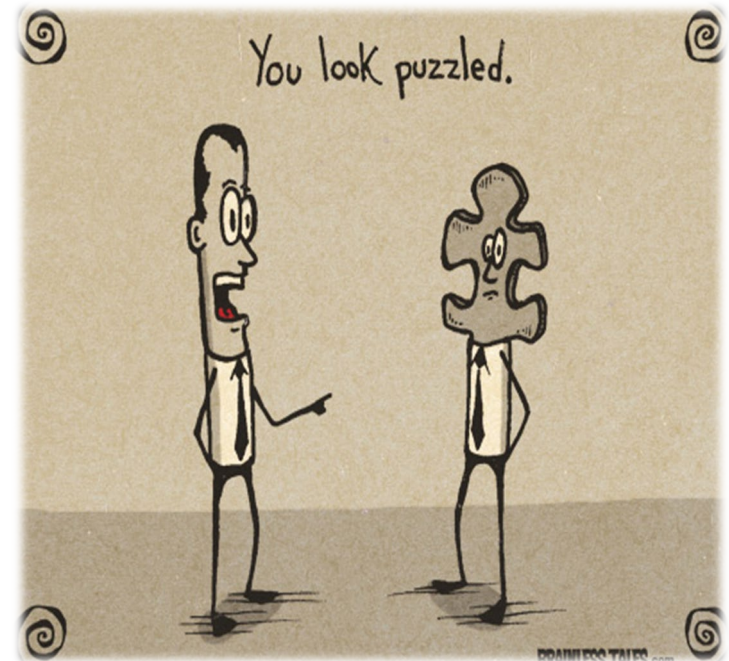
➤ Brownfields Prioritization



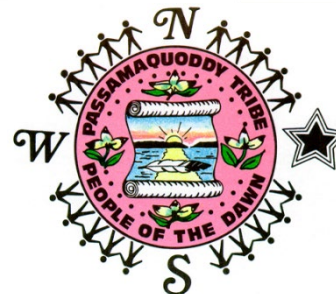
- Prioritization Criteria Development (zoning, access, plan consistency, size, etc.)
- Prioritization Criteria Application
- Site Ranking
- Identification of Potential Reuses

Direct Technical Assistance

- **Technical Document Review and Interpretation**
- **Brownfield Redevelopment Roadmap**
- **Brownfields Grant Critiques**



Who Can Receive NJIT TAB Assistance?



Government Entities

- Local
- County
- State
- Regional
- Tribal



Non-Profits

How do I Get Assistance?



CALL: **Hotline 973-642-4165**

Email: tab@njit.edu



Sean Vroom
973 596-6415
svroom@njit.edu



Available Brownfields Grants

- **Assessment Grants 3yr project period**
 - \$200,000
 - Use for Inventory, characterize and assess sites
- **Cleanup Grants 3 yr project period**
 - \$500,000 + 20% cost share
 - Remediation activities
 - Reuse/redevelopment planning
- **Revolving Loan Fund Grants 5 year project period**
 - up to \$1M
 - Capitalize an RFL program
 - Provide loans and sub-grants for clean up activities
- **Multi-Purpose (next solicitation FY '21)**
 - up to \$800,000 + \$40,000 cost share
 - Assessment and remediation activities
 - Revitalization planning



Ranking Criteria

1. Project Area Description and Plans for Revitalization

Target area & Brownfields

Revitalization of Target Area

Strategy for Leveraging Resources

2. Community Need and Community Engagement

Community need for funding

Threats to sensitive populations

Health or welfare sensitive populations

Greater than normal incidence of disease & adverse health conditions

Economically impoverished/disproportionately impacted populations

Community Engagement

Community involvement

Incorporating Community Input

3. Task Descriptions, Cost Estimates and Measuring Progress

description of tasks and activities


cost estimates and outputs

measuring environmental results

4. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

past performance

leveraging



Link Your Story Together

- **Community Need**
- Here are the brownfield issues in my target area and who I'm trying to help with this grant.
- **Project/Program Description & Feasibility of Success**
- Here's my step-by-step plan for the grant, what I'm going to spend the money on, and where I'm going to get the rest of money to get to redevelopment.
- **Community Engagement & Partnerships**
- Here's my step-by-step plan for how my partners and I will engage the community in this project and involve them in the decisions being made.
- **Project/Program Benefits**
- Here are the anticipated outcomes and my target area will benefit from redeveloping the brownfield sites.
- **Programmatic Capability & Past Performance**
- Here is my demonstrated ability to successfully manage the grant and produce the measurable results discussed in the proposal



Overview: Project Area Description & Plans for Revitalization

Here is:

- my community and the target area;
- the brownfield issues and their impacts on the community;
- how this grant fits into the community's revitalization plan
- the anticipated outcomes and how the target area will benefit
from revitalizing the brownfield sites; and
- the strategy to leverage resources to reuse the brownfield sites

Clearly identify
the **TARGET**
area.



Project Area Description & Plans for Revitalization -Overview

Target Area and Brownfields

Background and Description of Target Area

- Provide cultural and industrial description of your community that establishes your brownfield challenges and their impact on the community.
- Describe the specific area or areas where work will be performed.

Community may be the city/town or geographic area. The target area is an area within the community



Project Area Description & Plans for Revitalization



Target Area and Brownfields (cont'd)

Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s)

- Identify and describe your brownfield sites.
- **Assessment:** Describe the priority site(s); describe why it is a priority for assessment and reuse.
- **RLF:** Describe the priority site(s); describe why it is a priority for remediation and reuse.
- **Cleanup:** Describe the property(ies) targeted for cleanup.
- Describe past and current land uses, current site conditions (including structures), and...
- **Assessment/RLF:** potentially related environmental issues.
- **Cleanup:** the priority site's known contamination.



Project Area Description & Plans for Revitalization

Revitalization of the Target Area

Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans

Describe:

- The reuse strategy or projected reuse for the priority site(s).
- How it aligns with government's land use and revitalization plans.
- Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy
 - Stimulate economic development,
 - Facilitate non-economic benefits
 - Help spur economic growth

The degree that economic development will be stimulated or the community will benefit.



Project Area Description & Plans for Revitalization

Strategy for Leveraging Resources

Resources Needed for Site Reuse

- Describe
 - ☐ Your eligibility for monetary funding from other resources
 - ☐ Key funding resources needed for environmental assessment or remediation, and subsequent reuse of the priority site (s)
- **Cleanup Grants Only:** Describe funding that has been secured and attach documentation that substantiates the commitment(s)



Project Area Description & Plans for Revitalization

Strategy for Leveraging Recourses

Use of Existing Infrastructure

- Describe how grant will facilitate the use of existing infrastructure at the priority site and /or within the target area.
- If additional infrastructure needs are key to the revitalization plans, describe the infrastructure needs and funding resources that will be sought to implement that work.



Useful Tips

Project Area Description and Plans for Revitalization

- Set the stage for the rest of your narrative in this criterion.
- Outstanding applications will have a project that aligns with existing community revitalization efforts.
- Be as specific as possible when providing responses.
- Coalition applicants: Provide information on all coalition partners and their respective target area.
- Demonstrate that you have plans to get from A to Z.
- Demonstrate that your project is going to be successful

Project Area Description and Plans for Revitalization

Group Exercise # 1



Project Area Description and Plans for Revitalization

Tips, Tricks and Common Mistakes

- Distinguish where grant can be applied versus target area and priority site(s)
- Show community in the most impoverished light possible
- Do not over emphasize community successes
- Community Wide - focus on 3 priority sites that make the strongest case

Project Area Description and Plans for Revitalization

Tips, Tricks and Common Mistakes (cont.)

- Redevelopment strategy - address both:
 - Your redevelopment
 - How it aligns with regional/local plans. Areas without plans highlight community outreach, visioning, BF inventory, etc.
- Include community investment (i.e., streetscape improvements, utility upgrades, BID, etc.)

Consultant Tip

Cardno Inc.



Overview: Community Need and Engagement

Here is:

- Why my small and/or low-income community is unable to fund brownfield activities.
- How this grant will help populations in the target area that have a high incidence of adverse health conditions and greater than normal incidence of diseases.
- How this grant will help populations in the target area that shares a higher burden of environmental justice.
- How community partners will be involved.
- The plan for communicating project progress.





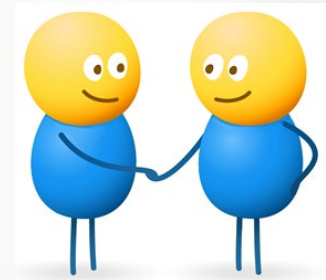
Community Need & Engagement

Community Need

The Community's Need for Funding

- Describe why the small and/or low-income community is unable to secure funding for brownfield activities.
- How will this grant meet the needs of this community.

Assessment Coalitions: Describe how coalition partners and communities that would otherwise not have access to resources to address brownfield sites will benefit.





Community Need & Engagement

Community Need (cont'd)

Threats to Sensitive Populations (in the target area)

- Describe how this grant will address the identification and reduction of threats to:
- The health or welfare of children, pregnant women, minority or low-income communities, or other sensitive populations.
- Populations that suffer from an increase in incidence of diseases or conditions that may be associated with the brownfield sites.
- Populations that have **environmental justice challenges** and/or disproportionately share the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental, and/or commercial operations or policies.





Community Need & Engagement

Community Engagement

Community Involvement

Identify:

- the local **project** partners
- the role each identified partner will play in project
- how they will be involved in making decisions with respect to site selection, cleanup, and future reuse of the brownfield sites.





Incorporating Community Input

- Include:***

- [illegible]

Community Need and Community Engagement

Group Exercise # 2



Community Need and Community Engagement

Tips, Tricks and Common Mistakes

- Quantify impacts to community when possible
- Show community in most impoverished light possible
- Describe your community engagement plan, even if it's ongoing
- Make sure you discuss how the input from the community engagement plan will be meaningfully incorporated into the project

Consultant Tip
Draper Aden Assoc.



Overview:

Tasks, Costs, & Measuring Progress

Here is:

- My step-by-step plan for implementing your brownfields project in the target area.
- What tasks need to be accomplished and when.
- Who's involved, and who's the lead in implementing those tasks.
- How funding will be budgeted to pay for those tasks, and how we came up with those numbers.
- How we will track the project to make sure it stays on schedule, on budget, and will accomplish the goals within the grant period.
- My strategy on the timing and schedule for leveraging other funding critical to the overall vision.



Tasks, Costs, & Measuring Progress

Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs

Program Implementation

- Discuss major task and the anticipated schedule for completing those tasks during the grant period.
- **Assessment/RLF:** If anticipated, discuss EPA-funded activities to occur beyond priority sites or outside target area(s), and the timing for when they occur within the grant period.
- If applicable, identify tasks and/or activities that will be funded from other sources; such as in-kind resources or funding contributed by your organization.
- Develop a list of EPA funded tasks/activities to implement project
- Group them logically into 4-5 major tasks that coincide with the project tasks in budget table.



Tasks, Costs, & Measuring Progress

Typical eligible tasks/activities may include:

- Program Management (all) – procuring a Qualified Environmental Professional, EPA reporting, financial and records management, internal progress meetings, etc.
- Assessment related – inventory work, site selection, securing site access, community engagement, Phase I and Phase II investigations, cleanup and reuse planning for a specific site, coordinated planning around multiple brownfield sites, etc.
- RLF related – issue and execute loans and subgrants, cleanup and reuse planning, community engagement, cleanup oversight, etc.
- Cleanup related – cleanup and reuse planning, community engagement, cleanup oversight, site cleanup, etc.
- Health Monitoring – coordination with the local health agency on health monitoring activities.



Tasks, Costs, & Measuring Progress

Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs (cont'd)

Identify: Task/Activity Lead

- For each task, identify the lead entity overseeing the work.

Discuss: Outputs

- Identify, and quantify as appropriate, the anticipated outputs/deliverables for each activity/task.



Useful Tips

- **Link Your Story Together: Project/Program Description & Feasibility of Success**
 - Here's my step-by-step plan for the grant, what I'm going to spend the money on, and where I'm going to get the rest of money to get to redevelopment.
- Describe the project/program clearly.
- Project/program description should correlate with the main points from the previous Community Need section.
- Proposed work should align with ongoing community revitalization efforts.
- Discuss leveraged resources committed toward the success of the grant and advancing the proposed site(s) to redevelopment
- Quantify any in-kind support.

Tips, Tricks and Common Mistakes

- Show a generalized timeline of how the work will be done in 3 years
- Show how the applicant will easily identify when the project is or is not on schedule
- Need to substantiate costs (don't back into them). Include unit costs
- Check your math
- Understand outputs versus outcomes
- Assessment in-house resources should go under leveraging, not in budget table

Consultant Tip

PM Environmental, Inc.



Overview: Programmatic Capability & Past Performance

Applicants should:

- Demonstrate ability to successfully manage the grant and produce the measurable results discussed in the proposal
- Describe the organizational structure
Highlight past performance on Brownfields grants or non-federal grants



Programmatic Capability & Past Performance



- Programmatic Capability
- *Organizational Structure*
- Demonstrate ability to manage grant and oversee the proposed work.
- Demonstrate sufficient personnel resources and capability to complete the project in a timely manner.
- **Assessment/RLF Coalitions:** Describe the proposed governance/decision-making structure among your coalition partners.
-
- *Acquiring Additional Resources*
- Demonstrate that you have systems in place to acquire any additional expertise and resources.



4. Programmatic Capability & Past Performance

Past Performance & Accomplishments

Three categories from which to choose:

Applicants who currently have/previously received a Brownfields Grant

– OR –

Applicants who have not received a Brownfields Grant but have received other federal/non-federal assistance agreements

– OR –

Applicants who have never received federal or non-federal assistance agreements

Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

Tips, Tricks and Common Mistakes

- Clearly describe the project management structure and how it will function
- Make sure you read the “or” in the evaluation criteria
- Use tables to summarize where appropriate

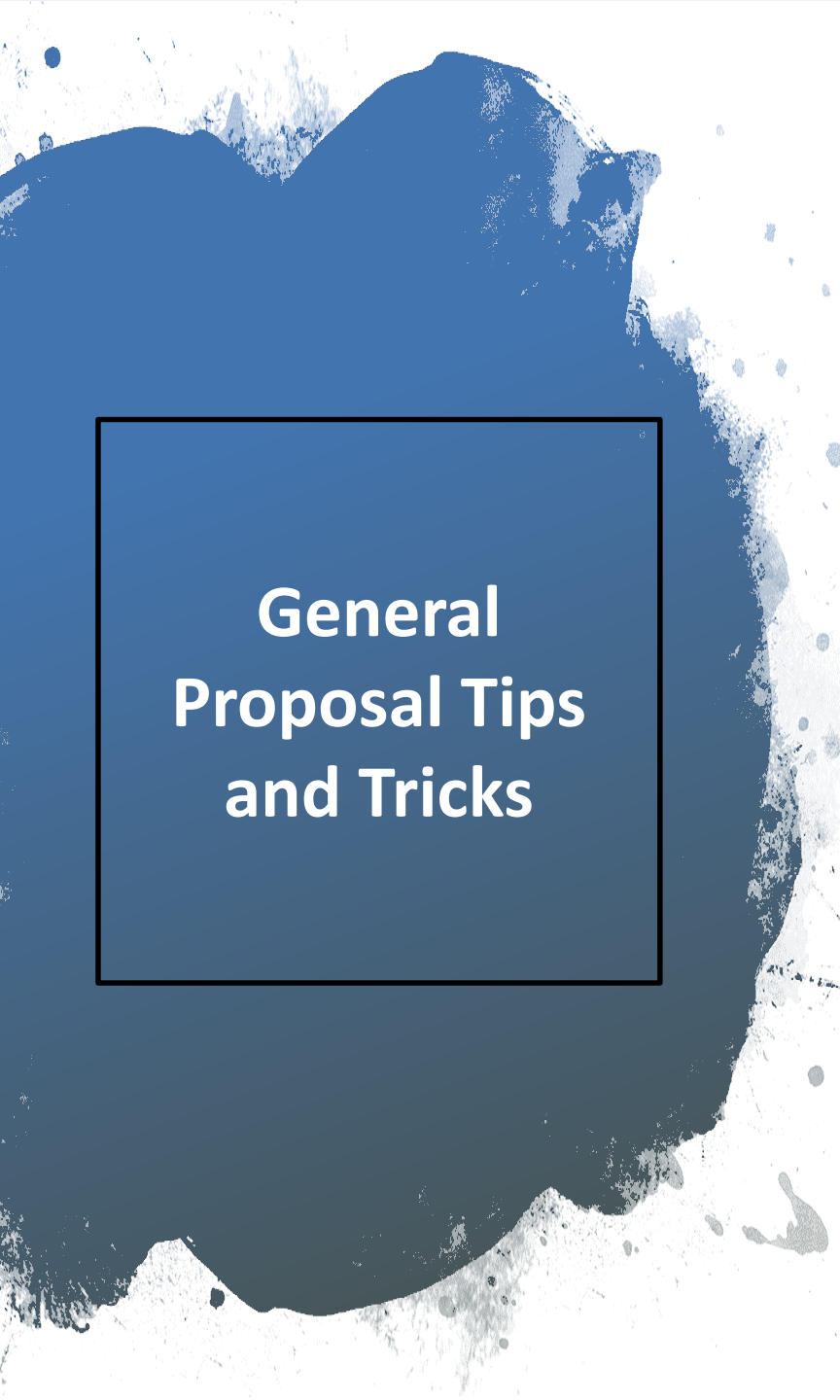
Consultant Tip
EEE Consulting, Inc.

General Proposal Tips and Tricks

- FOLLOW DIRECTIONS (read entire Guidelines)
- Write as though the reader knows NOTHING about your community
- Address all criteria – if it doesn't apply say so and explain why
- Use the Proposal Check Lists that may be associated with NOFA
- Be kind to your reviewers – minimize use of acronyms/technical/organizational jargon
- Don't rely on past successes – keep the application forward-focused

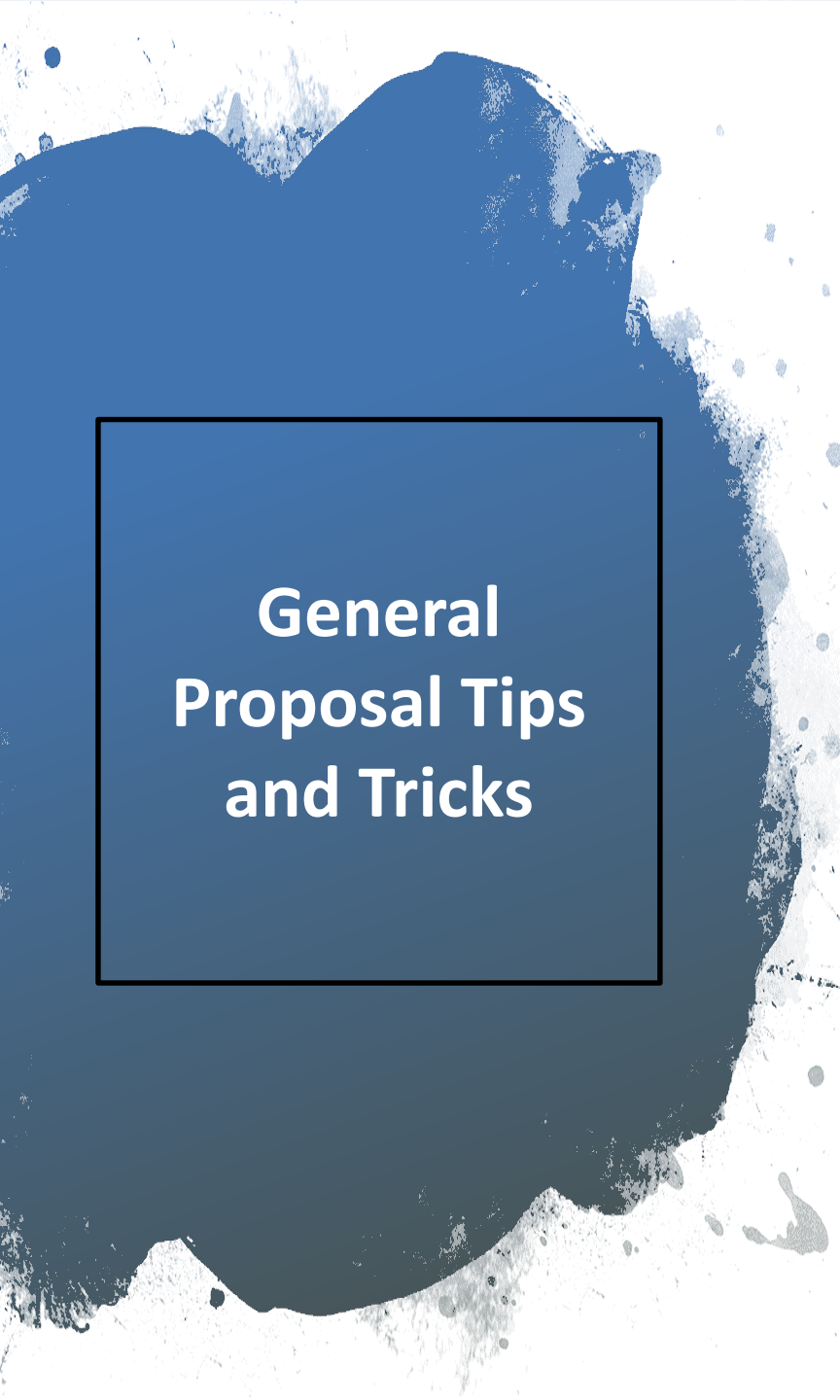


#1 Piece of Advice



General Proposal Tips and Tricks

- Decide what your story is. How is your community different from other applicants?
- Clearly define your priorities and weave them throughout your application
- Keep extraneous stuff out; it distracts from your story (No graphics or photos)
- Read and evaluate any proposal written by a consultant
- Do not use hyperlinks other than sourcing data



General Proposal Tips and Tricks

- Write your proposal from the evaluation criteria section of the guidelines versus the ranking criteria
- Use the outline provided in the guidelines
- Get an outside editor who has limited knowledge of the project to read and evaluate your proposal
- If you don't know what something is, don't just skip it! Check out EPA's Frequently Asked Questions



Tips for Writing the Proposal

- Read entire Guidelines for grant type which you're applying
- Write as though the reader knows Nothing about your community
- Number proposal pages and enumerate/identify the criterion
- Address All criteria. If an criterion doesn't apply, stat that and explain why
- Avoid using acronyms and technically/organizational jargon
- The quality of the response is extremely important (also review evaluation criteria)
- Make sure the attachments are organize
- Use Proposal checklist to ensure you're completed all

GRANT WRITING TIPS AND TRICKS

Questions?

**REGISTRATION
OPEN!**

December 11-13, 2019
with pre-conference
programming December 10

Join us at the
**LOS ANGELES
CONVENTION CENTER**



Visit **brownfields2019.org** for
more information!

EPA

ICMA