

## **Fiscal Year 2025 Frequently Asked Questions for Brownfields Job Training Grants**

As of May 31, 2024

EPA prepared these Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and Answers to assist prospective applicants with preparing Brownfields Job Training Grant applications for the Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) competition. Please review the [FY 2025 Brownfields Job Training Guidelines](#), also referred to as the Request for Applications (RFA), when preparing your application. If information in the FAQs differs from information in the statute, regulation, or the Guidelines, then the statute, regulation, or the Guidelines will take precedence. The FAQs will be updated periodically as we continue to receive questions.

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**A. Changes to the Brownfields Job Training Guidelines**

**A.1. How have the Brownfields Job Training Grant Guidelines changed?**

EPA has made several revisions to the Brownfields Job Training Guidelines since the last competition. A more detailed description of changes is outlined in the [Fiscal year 2025 Brownfields Job Training Guidelines Summary of Changes](#) and reflected in the solicitation.

**General Changes**

**Two new threshold eligibility criteria were added.**

**Coalition Agreement**

Each non-lead coalition member must submit a signed letter to the grant applicant (the lead coalition member) in which they agree to be part of the coalition. An active Memorandum of Agreement that includes a description and role of each coalition member may serve in place of the individual coalition members' letters. Include the document(s), as an attachment, in your application. **Documentation that is not included with the application will render that non-lead member ineligible from participating in the coalition, and potentially render the entire application ineligible if there is less than one non-lead member.**

Alternatively, if this application does not include non-lead coalition members, state 'n/a' or 'not applicable'.

**Expenditure of Existing Brownfields Job Training Grant Funds**

Current EPA Brownfields Job Training Grant recipients must demonstrate that the recipient has received payment from EPA (also known as 'drawn down'), and drawn down funds have been disbursed, for at least 50.00% of the funding for each Brownfields Job Training cooperative agreement by June 1, 2024, in order to apply for funding under this solicitation.

To demonstrate this, applicants must attach a copy of a financial record displaying the amount of cooperative agreement funds drawn down (e.g., a report from the Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) or general ledger entries). If necessary, applicants may contact the assigned EPA Project Officer for the cooperative agreement or Matt Wosje ([Wosje.Matthew@epa.gov](mailto:Wosje.Matthew@epa.gov)) to obtain draw down information from EPA's grant financial database (Compass Data Warehouse). Disbursements of drawn down funds must comply with requirements in EPA's General Terms and Conditions for timely disbursement of EPA funds (i.e., recipients other than states must substantially disburse all of the funds within 5 business days of draw down).

Alternatively, the applicant must affirm it does not have an open EPA Brownfields Job Training Grant.

## **B. Information on Submitting the Application**

### **B.1. What is the deadline for submission in FY25?**

Applications are due **Aug 15, 2024**, at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. **Applications received after 11:59 p.m. ET on Aug 15, 2024, will not be considered for funding.**

### **B.2. How do I submit my application?**

Your organization's Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Applications must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. ET on **Aug 15, 2024**. Please allow enough time to successfully submit your application package and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.

In order to submit an application through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), you must:

- Have a unique entity identifier (UEI),
- Have an active System for Award Management (SAM) account in [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov),
- Be registered in [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), and
- Be designated as your organization's AOR.

For more detailed instructions on submitting through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), please refer to our tip sheet which [can be found here](#).

### **B.3. How do I submit an application if I have limited access to the Internet?**

As stated in Appendix 1 of the Guidelines, an applicant may request to submit a hardcopy of the application if the applicant lacks the technical capability to apply electronically through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) because of limited Internet access or no internet access which prevents them from being able to upload the required application materials through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). The applicant must follow the procedures outlined at [www.epa.gov/grants/exceptions-grantsgov-submission-requirement](http://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.

### **B.4. How do I know if my grant application was received by the deadline?**

If submitted successfully, the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) will receive a **Submission Receipt** email confirming the application package was initially received. You can track the status of your application package anytime by using the link provided at the bottom of the email.

Next, [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) will process the application package to ensure it is error-free. If the application package passes this step, the AOR will receive a **Submission Validation Receipt for Application** email. Alternatively, if the application package has an error, the AOR will receive an email indicating the application package was "rejected with errors" and what the error is. This gives you the opportunity to resolve the error and for

the AOR to re-submit the application package before the submission deadline.

If you did not receive a confirmation email, need assistance with submitting your application package, or have questions, contact the [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) Help Desk at 1-800-518-4726 or [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). The Support Center is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; closed on federal holidays.

For more information on how to submit an application, see Appendix 1 of the Guidelines. Additionally, the [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) website has an [Applicant Training page](#), which includes a series of videos on various aspects of the submission process.

**B.5. My organization is registered in [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov). Should I check to make sure the account is active?**

Yes! You can only successfully submit an application package if your organization has an active account in [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov). The registration must be renewed annually by the E-Business Point of Contact, so make sure the account does not expire before the application submission deadline.

**B.6. Can I apply for grant funding if the [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov) account is not active, or is in the process of being updated or re-activated?**

No. Your organization must have an active account in [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov) in order to apply for funding.

**B.7. Can someone other than the Authorized Organization Representative submit the application package in [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)?**

No. The Authorized Organization Representative, designated by the E-Business Point of Contact, must sign and submit the application package.

**B.8. Why is the E-Business Point of Contact important to the application submission process?**

The E-Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC) is the individual in your organization who oversees all activities within [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and grants permissions to Authorized Organization Representatives (AOR).

If your organization is already registered in [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov), take note of who is listed as the EBiz POC. If you're not registered yet, it is the EBiz POC within your organization who must register your organization with [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov).

The EBiz POC is issued a Marketing Personal Identification Number (MPIN) by [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov), which gives the EBiz POC the authority to designate who in your organization can submit applications through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) (i.e., the Authorized Organization Representative).

The EBiz POC is also responsible for approving role requests in [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Upon creating an account in [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), the AOR role request is automatically sent to your organization's EBiz POC for approval.

Note, there can only be one EBiz POC per UEI number.

**B.9. My organization has several departments and corresponding UEI numbers? Can I use a different department's UEI number to submit the brownfields application package?**

No. You must use the UEI number assigned to the department that is submitting the application package. Additionally, this UEI number must correspond to the UEI number in [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov).

**B.10. Can I use another organization's UEI number to submit the application package?**

No. You must use the UEI number assigned to the organization that is submitting the application package. Additionally, this UEI number must correspond to the UEI number in [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov).

**B.11. The grant application has several attachments. Should I upload them separately or submit as one file in [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)?**

While not required, EPA recommends consolidating all grant application documents (the Narrative Information Sheet, Narrative, required attachments, etc.) into one pdf file. This ensures that EPA receives your entire submission and the submission is in the order that you intended. Please review the [Tips for Submitting Brownfields Grant Competition Applications](#) for additional application submission tips.

**B.12. Per the "Application for Federal Assistance" (SF-424), what is the "Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number" and the "CFDA Title"?**

The "Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number" is 66.815 and the "CFDA Title" is Brownfields Job Training Cooperative Agreements.

**B.13. How should I respond to Question 19 on the SF-424 "Application for Federal Assistance"?**

Question 19 on the SF-424 references Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. Applicants must choose one of three options:

*This application was made available to the State under the E.O. 12372 Process for review on (enter date).*

*Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.*

*Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.*

Applicants must answer question 19 in order to complete the SF-424 and submit the application package. This Executive Order does not apply to the Brownfields Job Training program, therefore option c. should be selected.

**C. General Guidelines and Application Process Questions**

**C.1. How can I receive help in understanding and responding to the FY25 Brownfields Job Training Grant Guidelines?**

EPA will be hosting a webinar for prospective applicants that will explain the process of applying for a Brownfields Job Training Grant and how applications will be evaluated. This webinar will be held on June 6, 2024, at 1 PM – 3:30 PM EDT. Please use this [link](#) to join the event. A copy of the presentation will be available on the [FY25 Brownfields Job Training Grant Solicitation Page](#) and a recording of the webinar will be posted once it is complete.

EPA Regional Job Training Coordinators may respond to questions regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the application, and requests for clarification about this announcement. EPA staff cannot meet with individual applicants to discuss applications, provide informal comments on applications, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to criteria. EPA’s limitations on staff involvement with grant applicants are described in EPA’s Assistance Agreement Competition Policy ([EPA Order 5700.5A1](#)). Contact information for each EPA Regional Job Training Coordinator can be found in Section VII of the RFA or [on EPA’s website](#).

While EPA may only provide limited pre-application assistance, Kansas State University (otherwise known as KSU JT-TAB), has an EPA cooperative agreement recipient that provides technical assistance to prospective Brownfields Job Training Grant applicants. KSU JT-TAB may provide detailed technical assistance to applicants and may be able to review segments of a drafted application. Note, however, that KSU JT-TAB may not prepare applications and that applicants are responsible for the content of their applications. Applicants may contact Blase Leven at KSU JT-TAB to request technical assistance at: [jt-tab@ksu.edu](mailto:jt-tab@ksu.edu).

**C.2. What does the FY25 Brownfields Job Training Grant application process entail?**

To apply for a Brownfields Job Training Grant, one must submit an application through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). In order to use [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), one must register their organization, obtain a UEI number and register with [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov). This process can take weeks to complete and applicants are strongly encouraged to begin their registration process well before the application deadline. For step by step instructions, please reference [applicant resources](#) posted on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) or EPA’s [tip sheet](#).

**C.3. How will my application be evaluated?**

In order for your application to be evaluated, it must first pass all threshold criteria.



Threshold criteria are evaluated on a pass/fail basis. If an applicant fails to meet any of the threshold criteria listed in Section III.B. of the RFA, the application will be disqualified from further consideration and the applicant will be notified within 15 business days of the determination.

Applications that pass threshold review will be scored on their responses in their Narrative by a national review panel. The national review panel will base their review on the evaluation criteria outlined in Section V of the RFA. Applicants should respond to the Narrative Section in Section IV.E of the Guidelines. Applications are scored out of 200 points.

**C.4. What are the “Other Factors” and how do I address these in my application? How are they used in the national evaluation?**

When making the final decision on which application to select for funding, the Selection Official may take into account one or more of the other factors, as outlined in Section V.B. of the Guidelines. Alternatively, the Selection Official may not take into account any of the other factors or considerations.

Applicants should provide responses on the applicable other factors using – Sample Other Factors Checklist Form, as described in Section IV.D.I., and should be included in the Narrative Information Sheet. EPA will use the content included in the application and/or external information to determine if the consideration applies.

**C.5. What is the maximum amount of money that an applicant may be awarded?**

An eligible applicant may apply for up to \$500,000 per grant for eligible activities. In FY25, EPA anticipates awarding approximately 20 Brownfields Job Training Grants at a total of \$10,000,000. Actual funding is dependent upon the availability of funds through the federal budget process, quality of applications received, and other applicable considerations. EPA reserves the right to partially fund applications or make no awards at all.

**C.6. Would my application be looked upon less favorably if my organization has never received any type of federal or non-federal financial assistance?**

No. If you have never received any type of federal or non-federal financial assistance, you must indicate so in the programmatic capability section of your application to receive a neutral score for this sub-criterion (5 points). Failure to respond to this criterion will result in a score of zero.

**C.7. How can I demonstrate my program is not duplicative of other federally funded environmental job training programs?**

Applicants must demonstrate that their proposed training program does not duplicate other Federally-funded programs for environmental job training in your target community, including training provided through the EPA’s Superfund Job Training

Initiative (SuperJTI); the EPA’s Environmental Justice Small Grants Program CFDA 66.604; and the EPA’s Surveys, Studies, Investigations, Training, and Special Purpose Activities Relating to Environmental Justice Grants Program CFDA 66.309.

Applicants must demonstrate that the proposed training project does not duplicate National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) Hazardous Waste Worker Training programs in their target community or Department of Labor (DOL) grant funds that include brownfields remediation, renewable energy, HVAC, or other energy-related training or wastewater treatment technology operator training. Federal agencies maintain lists of these grant programs at the following websites:

- EPA: [www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-job-training-initiative](http://www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-job-training-initiative)  
[www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice](http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice)
- NIEHS: [www.niehs.nih.gov/careers/hazmat/about\\_wetp/ecwtp/index.cfm](http://www.niehs.nih.gov/careers/hazmat/about_wetp/ecwtp/index.cfm)
- DOL: <https://www.dol.gov/general/grants/howto>

If you are listed on any of these websites as a recipient, you must explain how services under your proposed program will complement, but not duplicate, the existing federal environmental job training activities in your targeted service area (i.e., different target audience, such as a different age group, differing types of certification training).

**C.8. Are stipends or scholarships an eligible use of grant funds under this program?**

Yes. Stipends for students, including on-the-job training costs or reasonable child-care subsidies, are **eligible** under this grant opportunity. Recipients must maintain accounting records to support stipend payments and child care subsidies as indicated in the [EPA Guidance on Participant Support Costs](#).

Scholarship funds to support students’ enrollment in college courses are **not eligible**.

Costs associated with eligible participant support costs, including costs associated with transporting trainees to site visits during training or for trainees to get to and from class are **eligible**.

**C.9. Can Participant Support Costs exceed 40% of the total grant award?**

Not without prior approval by EPA’s Grants Management Officer (GMO) if the amount in the EPA-approved budget for Participant Support Costs (PSC) is 40% of the total award or less. It is very unlikely that approval will be granted. As stated in the Budget section of Section IV.E. Narrative on p. 29 of Solicitation EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-24-02, for the Brownfields Job Training Program “Transportation stipends, monetary stipends, and childcare subsidies are considered participant support costs that are separate and do not count toward instruction/training costs. Total amount of stipends, including participant support costs to hire the trainees as W2 employees, may not exceed 40% of total award.” Under 2 CFR § 200.456, PSCs are only allowable with prior EPA approval. EPA’s Award Official approves the amount of allowable PSCs based on the budget for the award. Based on the limitations of allowable PSCs stated in Solicitation EPA-I-OLEM- OBLR-24-02, GMOs would not approve an increase in

allowable PSCs beyond 40% of the total award absent a compelling justification submitted by recipient that was concurred in by the EPA Project Officer.

**C.10. If my organization is successful in obtaining EPA funding, can we charge the costs we incurred for a consultant to prepare our grant application?**

No. Costs for preparing your application are not an allowable direct administrative cost.

**C.11. Will EPA fund pre-award costs?**

EPA does not guarantee the payment of pre-award costs. Applicants incur pre-award costs at their own risk and EPA is under no obligation to reimburse applicants for pre-award costs. As indicated in 2 CFR § 1500.9, under certain circumstances, the applicant may be reimbursed for eligible, allowable, allocable, and reasonable costs that are incurred up to 90 days before grant award without prior EPA approval if:

The applicant includes the pre-award costs in its application and the work plan negotiated with EPA;

EPA agrees that the costs are eligible and allowable when the Agency approves the scope of work for the grant; and

Any procurement contracts that are funded with pre-award costs comply with the competitive procurement requirements within the grant.

As provided in 2 CFR § 200.458 pre-award costs must be incurred “. . . pursuant to the negotiation and in anticipation of the Federal award where such costs are necessary for efficient and timely performance of the scope of work.” EPA interprets this provision to require that eligible pre-award costs be incurred after applicants for competitive funding receive notification of selection.

Please note, an applicant must obtain prior EPA approval from the Award Official to incur pre-award costs more than 90 days before award. Applicants selected for award will need to discuss any pre-award costs greater than 90 days with their EPA Project Officer to discuss the process for getting these costs approved.

**C.12. What formatting should I use for writing my application?**

As stated in Section IV.C. of the RFA, the Narrative and Narrative Information Sheet must be typed on letter-sized (8½ x 11 inch) paper, be single-spaced, and should use Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri font, sized no smaller than 12-point font. All application materials, including Partnership Letters, must be submitted in English. Photos and graphics will not be considered. Attachments are limited to those identified in Section IV.G. of the RFA, and are limited to one scanned image per page. Applicants must provide their response to Section III.B. Threshold Eligibility Criteria as an attachment to the Narrative that is submitted to EPA. Extraneous materials, including attachments not listed, will not be considered. Application materials and attachments exceeding the page limits described below will not be reviewed.

Applicants are responsible for submitting a complete application, as described below, by the due date.

**C.13. If a Brownfields Job Training grantee provides training such as the ones described below, are the trainee participants considered Qualified Environmental Professionals upon completion?**

- **Training in the assessment, inventory, analysis, and remediation of sites or facilities at which hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, and petroleum products are located, transported, or disposed, including training for jobs in environmental sampling, demolition, underground storage tank removal, groundwater extraction, site remediation, and equitable development associated with brownfields.**
- **Training in chemistry, toxicology, and geology to the extent necessary to inventory, assess, remediate, and clean up contaminated sites.**
- **Training in the requirements and implementation of the All Appropriate Inquiries (AAI) Final Rule, as required in CERCLA Section 101(35)(B), and due diligence.**

No. The training provided as part of a Brownfields Job Training Grant is designed for an individual to be able to support a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) and/or work under the supervision and guidance of a QEP rather than to qualify as QEP immediately upon completion of the training courses. To become a QEP, an individual must meet a series of educational and/or experience requirements. For example, individuals who have a bachelor's degree or higher in engineering or science from an accredited institution of higher education and who have the equivalent of five years of relevant, full-time experience qualify as an environmental professional under the AAI final rule. Individuals who do not meet the educational requirements can still qualify as an environmental professional but if they have the equivalent of 10 years of relevant, full-time experience. "Relevant" experience is further described in [EPAs publication regarding AAI](#). It is unlikely that trainees in the Job Training Program will meet these educational and experience requirements immediately upon completion of the training courses described in the question.

**D. Definitions**

**D.1. What is the Justice40 Initiative and what is a disadvantaged community?**

On January 27, 2021, [Executive Order 14008](#) on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad Section 223 established the Justice40 Initiative. The goal of the Justice40 Initiative is that 40% of the overall benefits of Federal investments flow to "disadvantaged communities." [Guidance provided to federal agencies](#) on July 20, 2021 by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), and the National Climate Advisor included the following definitions and indicators of disadvantaged communities:

- Community – either a group of individuals living in geographic proximity to one another, or a geographically dispersed set of individuals (such as migrant

workers or Native Americans), where either type of group experiences common conditions.

- Disadvantaged – consider appropriate data, indices, and screening tools to determine whether a specific community is disadvantaged 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;
  - Access to healthcare; and
  - Geographic areas within Tribal jurisdictions.

Recognizing that some communities do not favor the term “disadvantaged,” EPA is using the term “underserved communities” to include communities targeted by the Justice40 Initiative. See FAQ D.3. for details.

## D.2. **What is the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST)?**

In [Executive Order 14008](#) on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad, President Biden directed the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) to create a [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool \(CEJST\)](#). The purpose of the tool is to help Federal agencies identify disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution. The current version of the tool provides socioeconomic, environmental, and climate information to inform decisions that may affect these communities. The tool identifies disadvantaged communities through publicly available, nationally consistent datasets.

Communities that are identified as disadvantaged by the tool are located in census tracts that are at or above the thresholds in one or more of eight categories of criteria, or if they are on land within the boundaries of Federally Recognized Tribes. Learn more about the methodology and datasets that were used to identify disadvantaged communities in the current version of the tool on the [Methodology & data page](#).

Applicants are encouraged to use the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) to help identify whether or not their priority site(s) is located within a disadvantaged census tract, as defined by the White House Council on Environmental Quality, for purposes of Justice40.

### D.3. **What is an Underserved Community?**

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 exemplified in the preceding definition of equity.” As described in the Executive Order, the term “equity” means “the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, 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.”

## E. **Applicant Eligibility**

### E.1. **Who is eligible to apply for a Brownfields Job Training Grant?**

Applicants must be either certain eligible **entities** as defined in CERCLA § 104(k)(1) or other eligible **nonprofit organizations** as defined in 2 CFR § 200.1. In accordance with CFDA 66.815, the following entities are eligible to apply for a Brownfields Job Training Grant:

- General Purpose Unit of Local Government (EPA uses the definition of *Local government* in 2 CFR 200.1.)
- Land Clearance Authority or other 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 Tribes from Alaska, with the exception of the Metlakatla Indian Community as noted below, from grant eligibility is statutory at CERCLA § 104(k)(1)). Intertribal Consortia 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. (This policy also may be obtained from your EPA Regional Job Training Coordinator listed.)
- Alaskan Native Regional Corporation, Alaska Native Village Corporation and the Metlakatla Indian Community. (Alaskan Native Regional Corporation and Alaska Native Village Corporation as those terms are defined in the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 and following).)

- Nonprofit organizations. For purposes of this grant program, consistent with the definition of *Nonprofit organization* in 2 CFR § 200.1 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. Eligible nonprofit organizations may, but are not required to be, exempt from taxation under section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code. Workforce Investment Boards and organized Labor Unions that meet these criteria may be eligible nonprofit organizations. Public and nonprofit private institutions of higher education (including community colleges and similar 2-year institutions) are eligible to apply.
- Nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are **not** eligible to apply. Additionally, for-profit or proprietary training organizations or trade schools are **not** eligible to apply.

**E.2. Can an applicant submit more than one application and serve different communities through each application?**

No. Applicants cannot submit multiple applications, even if the applicant proposes to serve a different target area.

**E.3. Can a nonprofit organization or eligible governmental applicant submit a joint application in partnership with a for-profit organization?**

No. EPA awards Brownfields Job Training Grant funds to a single eligible applicant. Successful applicants may contract for necessary goods and services with for-profit organizations following competitive procurement procedures as required by EPA grant regulations, as applicable. Refer to the [Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements](#) for detailed guidance.

**F. Brownfields Job Training Coalitions**

**F.1. What are Brownfields Job Training Coalitions and what requirements must a Brownfields Job Training Coalition meet?**

Brownfields Job Training Coalitions are designed for one “lead” eligible entity to partner with one or more eligible entities that do not have the capacity to apply for and manage their own EPA cooperative agreement. The lead coalition member Brownfields Job Training Coalition Grant application on behalf of itself and the other members for the job training work that will be performed within the target area. The coalition may request up to \$500,000 to recruit, train, and place unemployed and under-employed residents of solid and hazardous waste-impacted communities with the skills needed to obtain full-time, sustainable employment. The grant recipient (lead coalition member) must apply for and administer the grant, be accountable to EPA for the proper expenditure of the funds and be the point of contact for the other coalition members. A

Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) documenting the coalition's process must be in place prior to the expenditure and draw down of any funds that have been awarded to the lead coalition member. It is up to the coalition to agree internally on the distribution of funds and the mechanisms for implementing the assessment work.

**F.2. What does the Brownfields Job Training Coalition Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) contain? How do I obtain a copy of a sample MOA?**

The MOA is an agreement that all coalition members must sign prior to the expenditure of any awarded Brownfields Job Training funds. The MOA provides all members' contact information, how often the members will meet, how many students will be recruited, trained, and placed in an environmental full-time job, and other specifics on the managing of contractors, community involvement plans, program support for job placement, and specific commitments for coalition members.

**F.3. Can the lead Brownfields Job Training Coalition member be replaced with another eligible entity after the application is submitted?**

No. The lead entity cannot be replaced with another eligible entity after the application is submitted to EPA. Additionally, the lead member must partner with the other coalition members that were named in the application. EPA will evaluate the lead coalition member's Brownfields Job Training Coalition Grant application based on the composition of the coalition as described in the application. Lead coalition members should contact their EPA Project Officer if concerns arise regarding other coalition members.

**F.4. If I have an existing Brownfields Job Training Grant, am I eligible to apply for a Brownfields Job Training Coalition Grant or be a non-lead member?**

No. Coalition members may not be members of other FY25 Brownfields Job Training Coalition Grant applications, nor may coalition members submit a Brownfields Job Training Grant application as an individual applicant. A coalition member wishing to apply as part of a different Brownfields Job Training Coalition or as an individual applicant must withdraw from the coalition.

**F.5. Can a city and a redevelopment agency from the same city be coalition members even though they are from the same city?**

Yes, provided city and the redevelopment agency are separate legal entities under state and local law, and that the redevelopment agency is not otherwise an instrumentality, and meets the definition of an eligible entity as described in the Brownfields Job Training Grant Guidelines. The IRS provides guidance on determining whether organizations are instrumentalities of units of government which provides in pertinent part:

An instrumentality is an organization created by or pursuant to state statute and operated for public purposes. Generally, an instrumentality performs governmental



functions, but does not have the full powers of a government, such as police authority, taxation and eminent domain. A wholly-owned instrumentality of one or more states or political subdivisions is treated as a state or local government employer for purposes of the mandatory social security and Medicare provisions and also applies to entities covered under Section 218 of the Social Security Act. ... In Revenue Ruling 57-128, the IRS addressed the question of whether an organization is wholly-owned by one or more states or political subdivisions. In making this determination, the following factors are taken into consideration:

- Whether it is used for a governmental purpose and performs a governmental function subdivisions.
- Whether there are any private interests involved, or whether the states or political subdivisions involved have the powers and interests of an owner.
- Whether control and supervision of the organizations is vested in public authority or authorities.
- Whether express or implied statutory or other authority is necessary for its creation and/or use of the instrumentality, and whether such authority exists.
- The degree of financial autonomy and the source of operating expenses.

Schools, hospitals and libraries, as well as associations formed for public purposes, such as soil and water conservation, may be instrumentalities, depending on the facts and circumstances. State sponsorship of an organization, state regulation of its activities, the participation of its employees in a public retirement system and operation with public funds are among the factors to be considered in determining whether an organization is an instrumentality. If an organization is essentially under private ownership and control, it is not an instrumentality.

Note: Brownfields Job Training Coalitions are designed for the “lead” entity to partner with entities that have limited capacity to manage their own EPA cooperative agreement.

Additionally, as required in the Brownfields Job Training Grant Guidelines, only one target area can be identified in the application.

**F.6. Can two separate state agencies in the same state be members of the Brownfields Job Training Coalition?**

No. Two state agencies cannot be coalition members if they are components of the state government that are subject to direct control of the governor such as environmental agencies, transportation agencies, health departments, parks and recreation departments and departments of commerce. Further, a state agency can only be the lead member of a coalition. Other entities created by the state legislature such a regional planning commissions that are not subject to the direct control of the governor can be coalition members along with a state agency.

**G. Training Program Structure**

**G.1. What training is required?**

The only required training is OSHA 29 CFR 1910.120 40-hour HAZWOPER, beyond this, the applicant has the ability to design a curriculum as they see fit so long as the courses offered are an eligible use of grant funds. Please be sure to consult Section I of the FY25 Brownfields Job Training Grant Guidelines to see what courses are eligible and ineligible for funding.

**G.2. What is the average number of individuals trained during a training cycle?**

In past job training reporting, an average of 20-24 individuals are trained during each cycle. This number may fluctuate depending on where the training program is located, i.e., an urban area versus a rural community. Grant recipients may also have varying levels of enrollment based on the intensity and comprehensiveness of the curriculum, the number of certifications to be earned, and the varying costs of delivering training. EPA encourages applicants to train and place as many people as possible.

**G.3. What is the average number of training cycles delivered under a grant?**

Grant recipients typically offer 2-3 training cycles per year. This number can fluctuate depending on the curriculum being offered, as it correlates to available employment, and the schedule for when a grant recipient plans to offer training (days, nights/weekends, etc.). While EPA does not set requirements on the number of training cycles that must be offered, EPA encourages applicants to offer training as often as possible.

**Note:** EPA requires applicants to focus the fifth, and final, year of their project period on the placement and tracking of graduates and reporting results to EPA. Thus, it is assumed the last cycle of training will be concluded by the end of year four.

**G.4. Does EPA require grant recipients/applicants to have a set training curriculum?**

No, the only required training is OSHA 29 CFR 1910.120 40-hour HAZWOPER, as stated above.

EPA encourages applicants to have multi-faceted curricula and offer diversified training in order to assist graduates with obtaining sustainable, full-time employment in various cleanup, remediation and redevelopment activities. This is important given the nature of contractual short-term remediation work, seasonal hiring in the environmental and remediation fields, and for individuals who may be entering the workforce for the first time.

Courses within a curriculum may vary in their intensity and level of detail; EPA encourages applicants to clearly explain at what level each course will be offered (e.g., awareness, intermediate, and/or advanced).

**G.5. What are some things to consider when designing a curriculum?**

The goal of the Brownfields Job Training Program is to help its participants develop the skills and earn the certifications needed to secure full-time careers across a spectrum of brownfield-related activities, including the assessment, cleanup, remediation, and planning/site preparation for the revitalization of brownfield sites. Your proposed training curriculum must link to the local labor needs of your target community in order to secure employment for program participants. Before deciding what types of training to offer, the results of employer discussions conducted in your community and/or local labor market assessments can be used to help you forecast employment opportunities for which training is needed.

Obtaining commitments from employers in your community, who are looking for individuals with the certifications and skills you plan to deliver in your training, and who will hire graduates from your program can increase your application's chances of success.

**G.6. What is the right amount of information to include for describing each training course in a curriculum that is using Brownfields Job Training Grant funds?**

Applicants are responsible for determining what information to include in their application and the responses must provide sufficient detail to allow for an evaluation of the merits of the application. Please see the below for an example training course descriptions and the level of detail that an applicant may provide. Please note that these examples are intended to be illustrative. All training must relate to facilitating the inventory of brownfield sites, site assessments, remediation of brownfield sites, community involvement, or site preparation. Applicants must indicate the specific types of training they propose to deliver in their training program description.

- **OSHA 40- Hour HAZWOPER Training**

The course satisfies training requirements outlined in OSHA standards 29 CFR §§ 1910.120 and 1926.65, which require workers to complete HAZWOPER training before starting work at an uncontrolled hazardous waste operation. HAZWOPER training prepares cleanup and emergency response workers to operate safely during a variety of scenarios involving hazardous substances. Training includes hazard recognition, exposure limits, risk evaluation for chemical and general site safety concerns, operation of field monitoring equipment, and use of PPE. This training covers policies, practices and procedures that reduce the risk of injury and illness related to harmful exposures on the worksite.

- **Global Hazard Communication**

This course will cover the requirements of OSHA 1910.1200 to provide instruction in the proper classification of the potential hazards of chemicals, and appropriate methods of communication concerning hazards and appropriate protective measures to employee.

Topics will include: Hazard Classification, who's covered by the standard, Safety Data

Sheets, understanding chemicals, Personal Protective Equipment, and exposure to hazardous chemical, leaks and spills.

Outcomes include: Understanding the OSHA Hazard Communication and Globally Harmonized System standard; recognizing the requirements of an effective GHS Hazcom program and strategies to assist employers in developing proper procedures; identifying types of potential hazardous chemicals and the Hazardous Chemical Inventory, the purpose and information required by GHS of Safety Data Sheet, the required information for proper labels, including GHS pictograms, and Hazcom information and training requirements.

**G.7. Where can I find information about certified instructors who can deliver the needed training we are proposing?**

While EPA does not endorse specific instructors, several EPA programs do provide databases of certified instructors who can deliver different types training. For example, EPA's Lead Program provides a database of certified instructors who can deliver the new lead renovation, repair, and painting (RRP) training. This list can be found at [www.epa.gov/lead/renovation-repair-and-painting-program](http://www.epa.gov/lead/renovation-repair-and-painting-program). Note that contract instructors must be hired in compliance with competitive procurement requirements in 2 CFR Parts 200 and 1500.

**G.8. How much of the grant should go towards funding the direct training versus non-training programmatic expenses?**

There is currently no requirement for how much of the grant should be committed directly towards training versus non-training programmatic expenses. Although grant funds can be used for a variety of eligible activities (e.g., costs for screening and placement, outreach, and curriculum development, among other activities), EPA prefers that the bulk of grant funds go toward training costs (i.e., personnel costs to instructors and other direct costs of training).

The exact budget allocation for each program is expected to vary to some degree depending on a variety of factors and will be reflected in the EPA approved scope of work. For example, some programs may be able to commit more funds directly towards training while others may require supporting costs for travel or curriculum development. In the latter case, it is important to thoroughly explain the additional costs and fully justify the budget allocation in your application. Applicants are still encouraged to seek non-EPA supplemental funding and leverage additional funds to support non-environmental training costs whenever possible.

**G.9. Can a grant recipient conduct a training cycle in another language, e.g., Spanish?**

Yes, if the applicant chooses to serve a predominantly non-native English-speaking population (e.g., Spanish speaking residents), the applicant may choose to deliver training in that language. The applicant should be cautious and mindful that examinations for certifications may be in English, and as noted below there are

requirements relating to U.S. citizenship or lawful permanent residents. Thus, the applicant should verify state, local, and/or federal certification requirements beforehand. Applicants should also provide details about how individuals receiving instruction in languages other than English will be able to secure employment - keeping in mind potential barriers that may arise.

Applications, and any accompanying partnership letters, must be submitted in English.

**G.10. Can a grant recipient provide training to individuals who are not currently legal residents of the United States?**

No. Costs for training individuals who are not citizens of the United States, the territories, and/or U.S. possessions, and/or lawfully admitted to the U.S. for permanent residency (i.e., Green Card holders), are unallowable in the Brownfields Job Training Program based on a policy decision to continue to apply the requirements in [40 CFR § 45.135\(a\)](#). These requirements applied to the Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Program which was the predecessor to the Brownfields Job Training Program.

**G.11. Can a grant recipient provide training to individuals under the age of 18?**

Yes, grant recipients may provide training to individuals under the age of 18, but the individuals should be at least 17 years old to enter a brownfields job training program. Please note that the Fair Labor Standards Act prohibits youth under the age of 18 from being employed in hazardous occupations. If providing training to individuals under the age of 18, it is important for grant recipients to follow child labor laws, as discussed by DOL at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/YouthRules/young-workers/non-ag-16-17>.

**H. Community and Employer Partnerships**

**H.1. Am I required to inform the target community of my intention to apply for a Brownfields Job Training Grant before or during the preparation of my application?**

EPA does not require Applicants to inform their target community of their intention to apply for the grant; however, EPA strongly encourages applicants to do so. We find that applicants who hold a community meeting, notify the community about the proposed environmental training program prior to submission of an application, and work with and solicit feedback from diverse community constituents about the proposed program prior to submission, typically have stronger applications.

For example, working with the community and conducting ongoing, meaningful community involvement will usually help applicants score higher when their applications are evaluated because this often means their programs will better reflect the needs of the community and will have already started marketing their program within the community. Employers, workforce investment boards (WIBs), community

colleges, and community-based organizations provide critical partnerships needed to deliver a successful training program – especially in light of the fact that grant funds may not be used to provide life skills training or social services which can be leveraged through these partnerships.

## H.2. **How can I get the target community involved in my proposed training?**

To engage your target community in the proposed training program, try to participate in events or activities already scheduled in your target community (e.g., town hall meetings, neighborhood advisory council meetings, church functions, etc.). Be prepared to make an announcement or distribute flyers with information about your proposed training program. Another good idea would be to have a draft of your application available at the city's webpage or public library and encourage the community to provide comments.

## H.3. **What type of roles might community-based organizations play in my proposed training?**

Community-based organizations can help you provide the non-environmental training (not covered under this grant) that may be required to help participants retain employment. Community-based organizations can play a number of valuable supporting roles including (but not limited to):

- Educational services, such as offering GED classes, life skills training, and recruitment assistance in the target community; and
- In-kind contributions: staff time, supplies, transportation, daycare services, equipment required for training, or providing a facility to host events or training.

## H.4. **How do I get potential employers from my target community involved in my proposed training program?**

An essential part of any successful job training program is the involvement and participation of potential employers. After potential employers become aware of your proposed training program, encourage them to help in the design and delivery of your training program by:

- Inviting them to be part of your steering committee
- Helping with the design and development of the training curriculum
- Agreeing to provide on-the-job training or internships to trainees
- Providing resources to support training such as equipment
- Providing mentoring to trainees

EPA encourages to discuss their efforts to engage the employer community in their responses to the appropriate evaluation criteria.

## H.5. **Where can I find information on other environmental job training programs and receive assistance in developing my own?**

See [EPA's Current and Past Grantees Map](#) for potential job training providers you can

collaborate with.

Applicants may also find more information on environmental health and safety training at the National Institute of Environmental Health Science’s (NIEHS) Worker Education and Training Program website at <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/careers/hazmat>.

The Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) Communities grant recipients can also provide technical assistance to existing and prospective applicants interested in submitting an application for a Brownfields Job Training Grant. For a listing of these organizations and contact information, visit: [www.epa.gov/brownfields/brownfields-technical-assistance](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/brownfields-technical-assistance). You may also find the TAB provider Brownfields Job Training Point of Contact for your Region in the [Brownfields Job Training Grants Tip Sheet](#).

## **I. Administrative Costs**

### **I.1. Are there limits on administrative costs for Brownfields Job Training Grants?**

Yes. Under CERCLA § 104(k)(5)©, recipients may only use up to 5% of the amounts of EPA funds made available under a Brownfields grant to pay an administrative cost.

### **I.2. My organization’s federally negotiated rate that is greater than 5%. Can we charge more than 5% for indirect costs?**

No. We understand that many entities have negotiated indirect rates. However, the statutory authority for the Brownfields competitive grants caps the amount of grant funds that can be spent on administrative costs to 5%. The 5% cap of administrative costs is for all administrative costs, including indirect rates and other administrative expenses. For example, if an entity wants to charge their indirect rate to the grant, and their negotiated indirect rate is more than 5%, then they may charge their full negotiated rate but the total amount of allowable indirect costs is limited to 5% of the amount of the EPA grant. No other administrative expenses may be charged to the grant.

### **I.3. Does the term “administrative cost” include both direct and indirect costs?**

Yes. Administrative costs include certain direct costs of grants administration and all indirect costs.

*Direct Administrative Costs*, including those in the form of salaries, benefits, contractual costs, supplies, and data processing charges, are costs that are not included in the recipient’s indirect cost pool and are necessary to comply with the provisions of the Uniform Administrative Requirements for Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 CFR Parts 200.

*Indirect Costs* are those that are not specifically related to implementing the EPA award

and are not readily identified with a specific project or organizational activity but incurred for the joint benefit of both projects and other activities. Overhead costs are a typical example of an indirect cost. Indirect costs are usually grouped into common pools and charged to benefiting objectives through an allocation process/indirect cost rate; [2 CFR § 200.414](#) and other provisions of the Uniform Guidance.

EPA's interpretation of the term "Administrative Cost" in CERCLA § 104(k)(5)© is based on similar limitations on administrative costs contained in sections 119(a)(1), (d)(4) and (d) and 319(h)(12) on the Clean Water Act.

**I.4. Does the limit on administrative costs for Brownfield Grants conflict with the requirement in 2 CFR § 200.414© for EPA to accept recipients' negotiated indirect cost rate?**

No. The regulation states that "[A] Federal awarding agency may use a rate different from the negotiated rate for a class of Federal awards or a single Federal award only when required by Federal statute . . .". As provided in CERCLA 104(k)(5)(E) administrative costs for Brownfield Grants are limited to 5% of the amount of EPA funds made available under a Brownfields Grant.

**I.5. What is the difference between an administrative cost and a programmatic cost?**

*Administrative Costs.* Administrative costs are direct costs, including those in the form of salaries, benefits, contractual costs, supplies, and data processing charges, incurred to comply with most provisions of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, And Audit Requirements For Federal Awards contained in 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E. Direct costs for grant administration are ineligible even if the recipient or subrecipient is required to carry out the activity under the grant agreement. **Administrative costs include indirect costs the recipient incurs under the OMB Cost Principles found at 2 CFR Part 200.**

*Programmatic Costs.* EPA has determined that costs for activities that are integral to achieving the purpose of the cooperative agreement are considered as "programmatic" costs, not administrative costs. Direct costs are defined in the applicable OMB Cost Principles Circular. As required by 2 CFR § 200.403(d), recipients must classify administrative costs as direct or indirect consistently and may not classify the same types of cost in both categories. Please review 2 CFR § 200.412, *Classifications of Costs*, for more information.

**I.6. What are examples of eligible direct administrative costs?**

Eligible administrative costs subject to the 5% limitation include direct costs for:

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. Record-keeping associated with equipment purchases required under 2 CFR §



- 200.313;
- ii. Preparing revisions and changes in the budgets, scopes of work, program plans, and other activities required under 2 CFR § 200.308;
- iii. Maintaining and operating financial management systems required under 2 CFR § 200.302;
- iv. Preparing payment requests and handling payments under 2 CFR § 200.305;
- v. Financial reporting under 2 CFR § 200.327;
- vi. Non-federal audits required under 2 CFR 200 Subpart F; and
- vii. Closeout under 2 CFR § 200.344 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.7. What are examples of allowable programmatic costs that are not subject to the 5% administrative cap?**

EPA has determined that direct costs for activities that are integral to achieving the purpose of the cooperative agreement are considered as “programmatic” costs, not administrative costs. Direct costs are defined at [2 CFR § 200.413](#). As required by 2 CFR § 200.403(d), recipients must classify administrative costs as direct or indirect consistently and may not classify the same types of cost in both categories. Please review 2 CFR § 200.412, *Classifications of Costs*, for more information.

The following are examples of eligible programmatic costs:

- Developing training curricula
- Compensating instructors
- Payments to program participants for transportation
- Rental of classroom space provided that same cost is not included in the recipient's indirect cost rate
- Outreach to recruit students
- Job placement activities
- Training for recipient employees including costs for attending the National Brownfields conference
- Costs for procuring contracts and contract administration
- Costs for managing subawards

Please refer to [Appendix A of EPA's Subaward Policy](#) for information on the difference between subawards and procurement contracts.

**I.8. Can unrecovered indirect costs in excess of the 5% limit on Administrative costs be used for voluntary cost share?**

No. Consistent with [2 CFR § 200.306\(b\)\(4\)](#) and the definition of *Voluntary committed cost sharing* in [2 CFR § 200.1](#), Section III B. of the Request for Applications advises that voluntary cost shares may only be met with allowable costs. Unrecovered indirect costs normally may be used to meet cost share requirements, mandatory or voluntary, with prior approval of EPA's Award Official (or GMO post-award) as provided at

[CFR § 200.306\(c\)](#) and sections 6.0 and 6.5 of EPA’s [Indirect Cost Rate Policy](#) and implementing [Guidance](#). However, for costs to be allowable as cost share they must conform to any statutory limitations on the allowability of costs as provided in [2 CFR § 200.306\(b\)\(4\)](#) and [2 CFR § 200.408](#).

Indirect costs in excess of the CERCLA § 104(k)(5)(E)(i) 5% administrative cost limitation are unallowable.

I.9. **Can unrecovered indirect costs in excess of the 5% limit on administrative costs be counted towards leveraged funding other than voluntary cost share?**

Yes. As stated in Section III B. of the Request for Applications:

Other leveraged funding/resources that are not identified as a voluntary cost share. This form of leveraging may be met by funding from another federal grant, from an applicant's own resources, or resources from other third-party sources. This form of leveraging should be discussed in the application but should not be included in the budget narrative or table. Costs covered by this form of leveraging need not be eligible and allowable project costs under the EPA cooperative agreement. While this form of leveraging should not be included in the budget, if selected, the grant 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 grant performance, then EPA may reconsider the legitimacy of the award and/or take other appropriate action as authorized by 2 CFR Parts 200 or 1500.

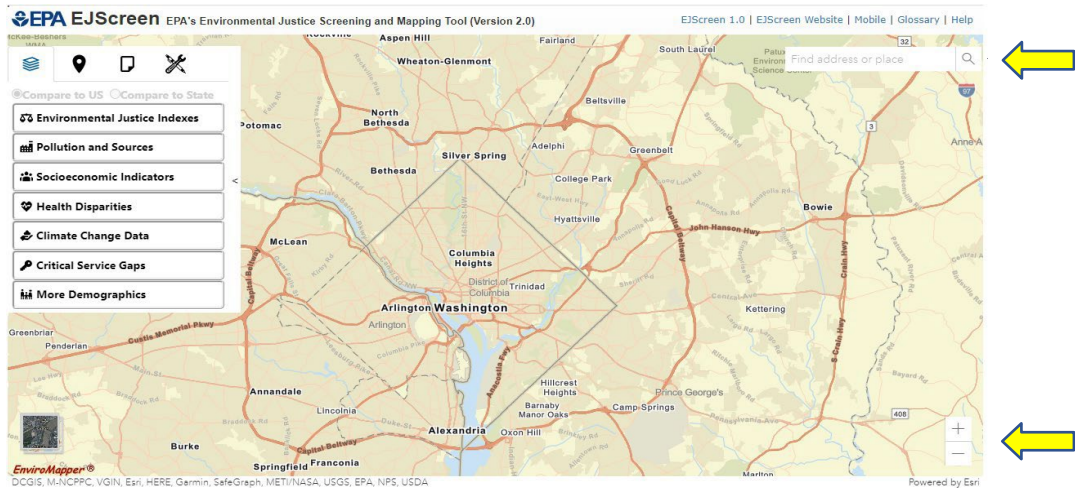
I.10. **If I name a consulting firm as a “partner” in the application is it proper to award that firm a sole source contract on that basis?**

No. All contracts for professional services in excess of the \$10,000 micro-purchase threshold must be awarded competitively to the maximum extent practicable and in compliance with requirements to consider disadvantaged business enterprises set forth in [40 CFR Part 33](#). The market for consulting services is robust and it is unlikely that competition is impractical. Note that as required by 2 CFR § 200.320(a) recipients must distribute non-competitive micro-purchases equitably among qualified suppliers and the price must be reasonable. Recipients practices for distributing micro-purchases are also subject to requirements in [40 CFR Part 33](#) for participation of disadvantaged business enterprises in EPA financial assistance programs. Additional information regarding EPA policies on procurements under EPA financial assistance programs is available in our [Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements](#).

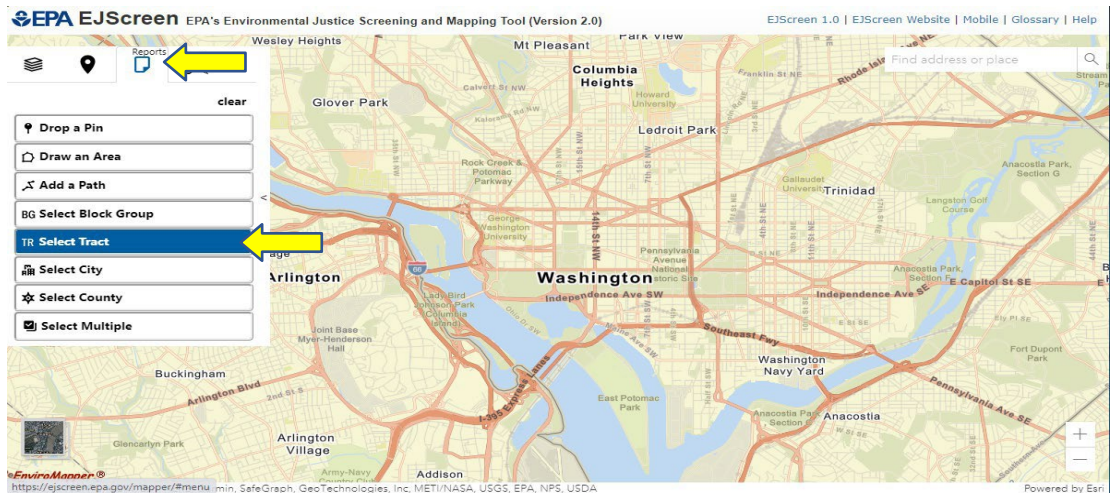
## J. Using EJScreen

### J.1. How can I find my census tract number?

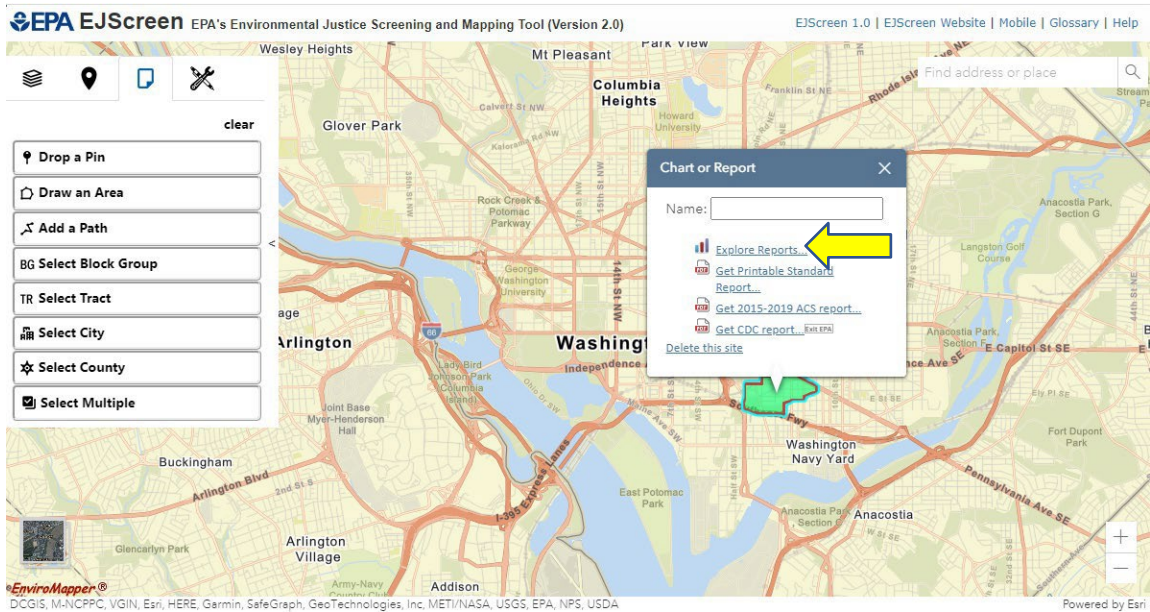
One way to find your target area's census tract number(s) is using EPA's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (EJSCREEN), <https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>. Use the search bar at the top right to find an address or place on the map. Use the plus(+) symbol in the top left to zoom in, or the minus(-) symbol to zoom out.



Click "Reports" on the left menu and click "Select Tract."

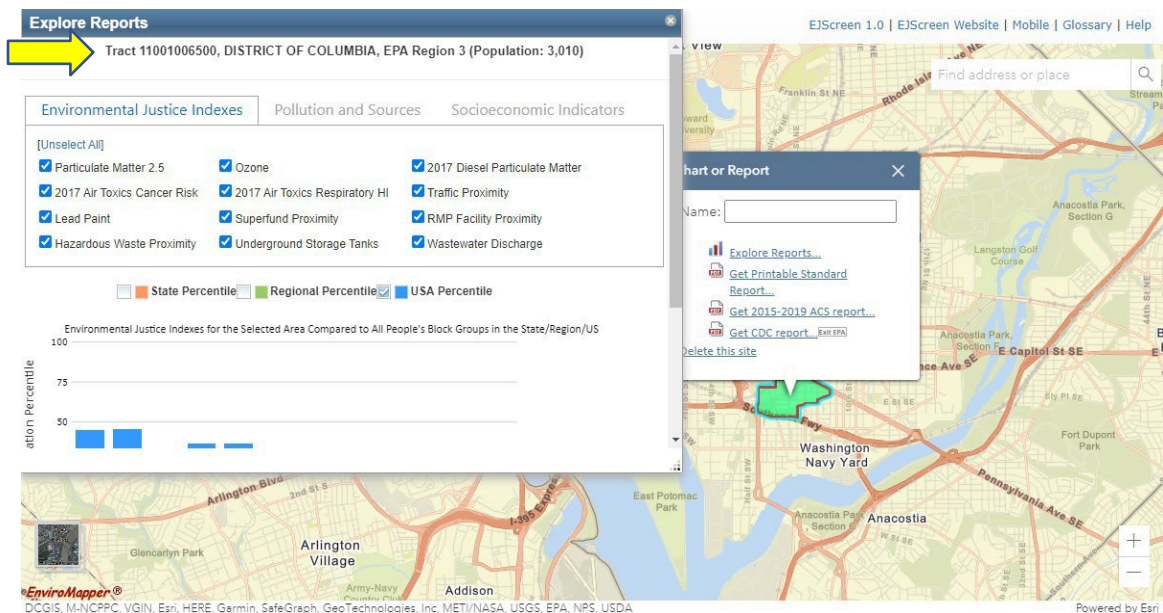


Click on any area of the map. In the Chart or Report pop-up that appears, select “Explore Reports...”

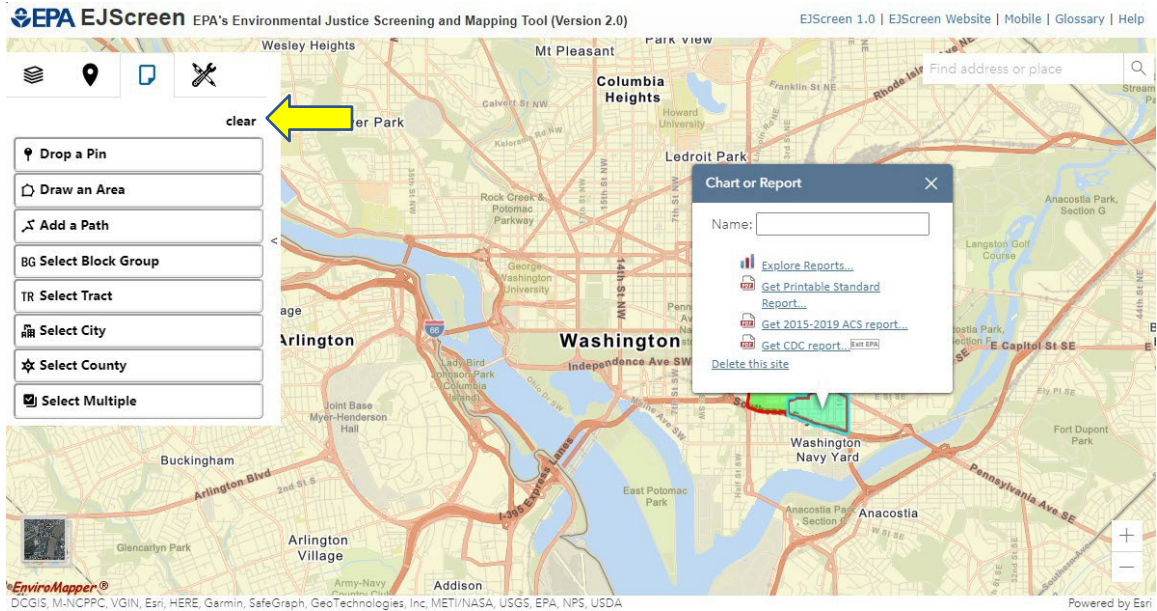


The eleven-digit census tract number for the area you selected will appear at the top of the Explore Reports pop-up that appears. Click and drag your cursor to highlight the census tract number in the pop-up and copy and paste the eleven-digit number into your application Narrative Information Sheet.

Note that you must repeat this process to look up additional census tract numbers. The Explore Reports pop-up only displays one census tract number at a time for the census tract that you most recently clicked on the map.

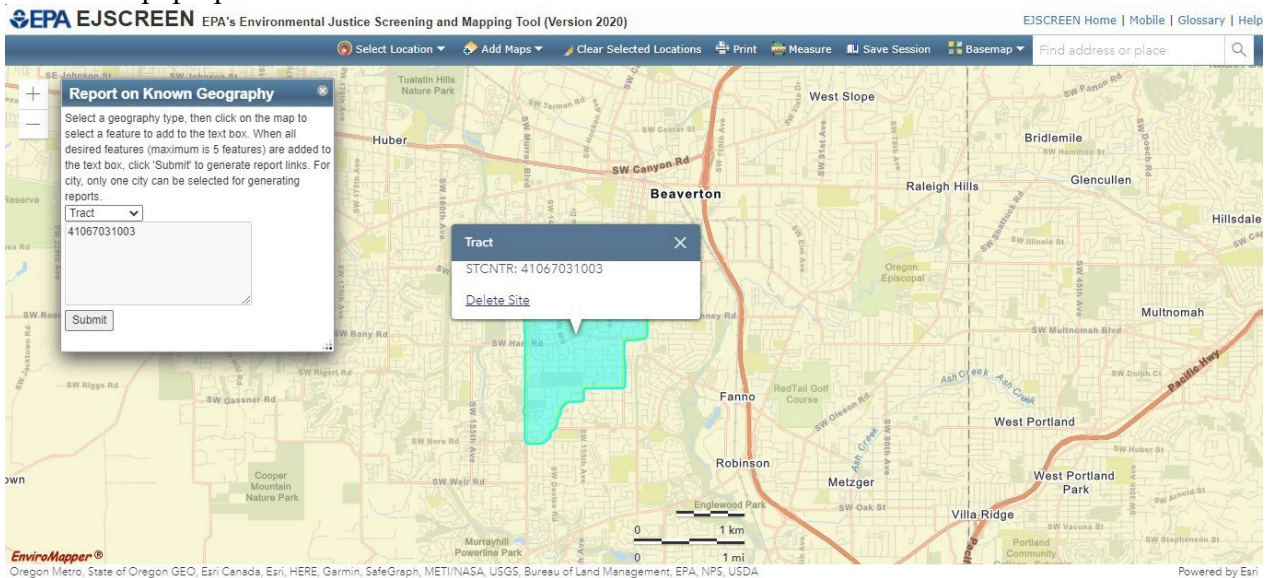


You can clear the selected census tract(s) from the map by clicking on “clear” on the



left menu.

Click on any area of the map, and the area’s census tract number will auto populate in the pop-up.



Click additional areas to highlight them on the map and add their census tract number to the pop-up box. You can remove a selected census tract by clicking on the highlighted area and selecting “Delete Site.” Click and drag your cursor to highlight the census tract numbers in the pop-up and copy and paste the numbers into your application Narrative Information Sheet.

## J.2. How do I use data to identify whether my community is underserved?

Applicants are encouraged to use the [EPA IRA Disadvantaged Communities](#) layer in [EJScreen](#) to describe and identify impacts to the target area population and gain a better understanding of the communities that may be adversely and disproportionately affected by environmental or human health harms and risks. Alternatively, applicants may use state/regional dataset(s) or geospatial mapping tool(s) to illustrate impacts to the target area population, which may or may not incorporate a state's own definition of an overburdened or other type of identified community.

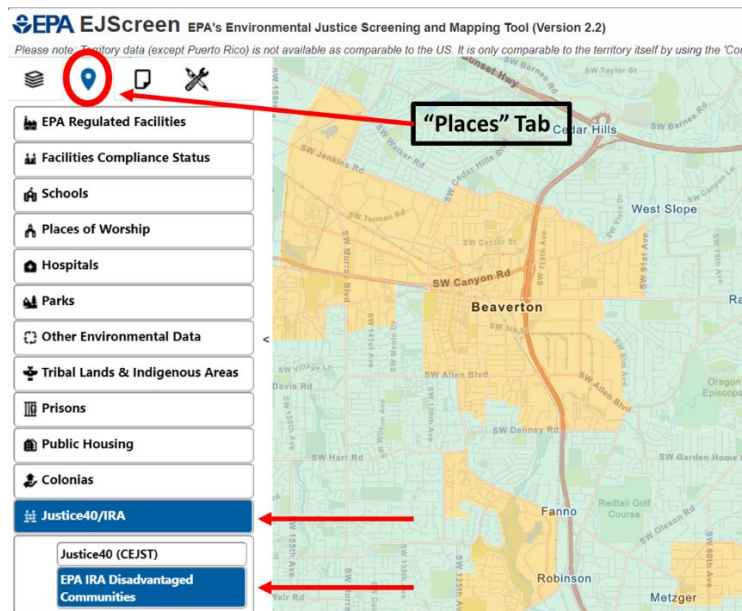
### 1. EJScreen using EPA Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Disadvantaged Communities Map

The EPA IRA Disadvantaged Communities map combines datasets from multiple mapping tools to determine whether a community is disadvantaged. All datasets are assigned values at the Census block group level.

The criteria and associated datasets used in the map are:

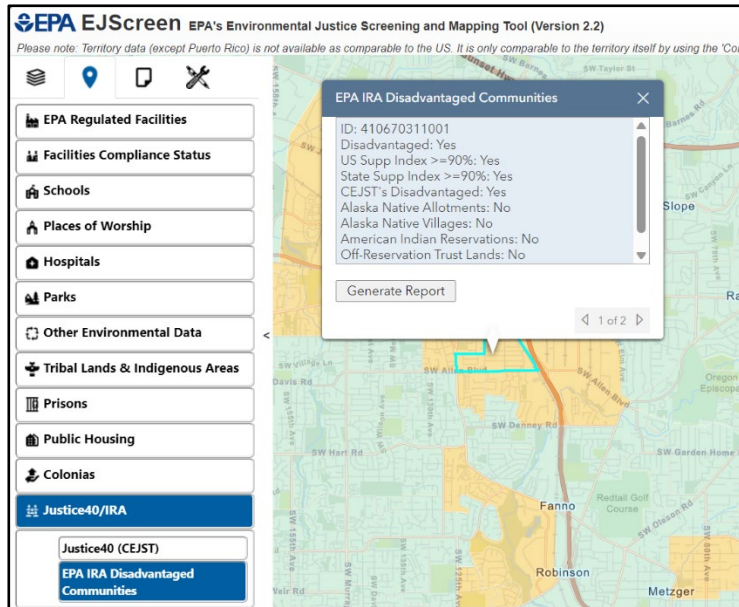
- Any census tract that is included as disadvantaged in the [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool \(CEJST\)](#),
- Any census block group at or above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile for any of EJScreen's Supplemental Indexes when compared to the nation or state, and
- Any of the following geographic areas within the following Tribal lands category in EJScreen:
  - Alaska Native Allotments
  - Alaska Native Villages
  - American Indian Reservations
  - American Indian Off-reservation Trust Lands
  - Oklahoma Tribal Statistical Areas

Within [EJScreen](#), EPA's IRA Disadvantaged Community layer can be found in the "Places" tab by clicking the "Justice40/IRA" category, and then selecting "EPA IRA

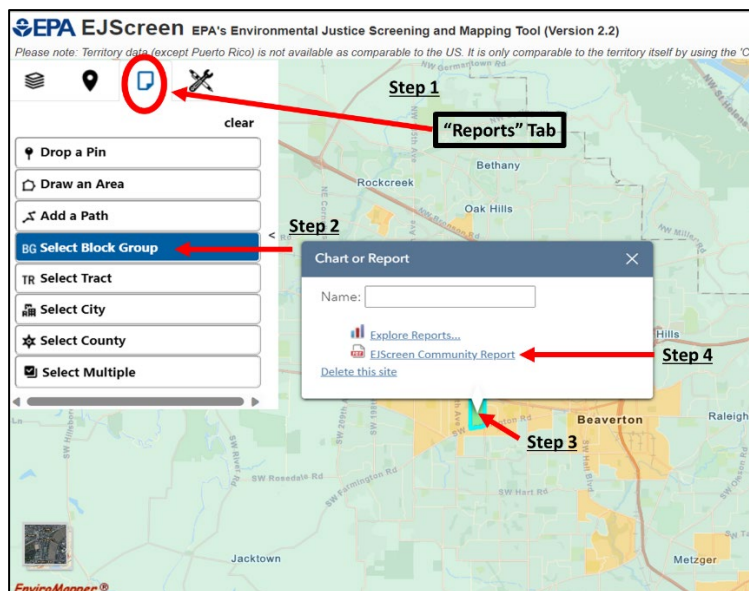


Disadvantaged Communities.” See below.

Users can then click on the individual block groups to generate a pop-up indicating the criteria which led to the designation. An EJSscreen Community Report at the block-group level can be generated directly from this pop-up. See below:



Alternatively, to generate an EJSscreen Community Report that demonstrates the site has positively impacted an underserved community, click the “Reports” tab and then “Select Block Group” or “Select Multiple”. Click on the underserved communities which have been positively impacted by that site and when the pop-up appears, select “EJSscreen Community Report.” See below.



To further assist applicants, EPA has provided the underlying data for the map in the following formats:

- A .csv file of the data is available at:  
[https://gaftp.epa.gov/EPA\\_IRA\\_Public/EPA\\_IRA\\_Disadvantaged.csv](https://gaftp.epa.gov/EPA_IRA_Public/EPA_IRA_Disadvantaged.csv).
- A .gdb file of the data is available at:  
[https://gaftp.epa.gov/EPA\\_IRA\\_Public/EPA\\_IRA\\_Disadvantaged.gdb.zip](https://gaftp.epa.gov/EPA_IRA_Public/EPA_IRA_Disadvantaged.gdb.zip).
- Both datasets can be found on the EPA IRA ftp site:  
[https://gaftp.epa.gov/EPA\\_IRA\\_Public/](https://gaftp.epa.gov/EPA_IRA_Public/).
- Additionally, a feature service of the EPA IRA Disadvantaged Communities map is available here:  
<https://epa.maps.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=f3be939070844eac8a14103ed6f9affd>

Applicants can also contact their EPA [Technical Assistance to Brownfields Communities \(TAB\) Provider](#) for guidance on using the tool.

## **2. Other EJ-focused datasets or geospatial mapping tools**

Applicants may use state/regional dataset(s) or geospatial mapping tool(s), which may or may not incorporate a state's own definition of a "disadvantaged" or "underserved" community, to identify disadvantaged or underserved communities and gain a better understanding of the communities that may be adversely and disproportionately affected by environmental or human health harms and risks. The applicant should identify where the applicable definition is located (e.g., on the State's website). The applicant should consider appropriate data and 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;
- Access to healthcare; and
- Geographic areas within Tribal jurisdictions.

The variables above are from the [Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative](#) provided to federal agencies on July 20, 2021 by the Office of Management



and Budget (OMB), CEQ, and the National Climate Advisor.