

A decorative graphic featuring three sets of concentric blue circles in the top right and bottom right corners. A thin blue line runs diagonally from the top left towards the center. The entire page is enclosed in a black rectangular border.

## **FY2015 Assessment Guideline Checklist**

The Agency will evaluate applicants' proposals on their merits and use of this checklist does not guarantee funding from EPA. This checklist is designed to serve as a guide for Brownfields Program applicants in preparing their proposals. This checklist does not serve as a substitute for reading the "Proposal Guidelines for Brownfields Assessment Grants" or the Frequently Asked Questions.

**October 2014**

## Proposal Checklist for Assessment Grants

Before you submit your proposal(s) for assessment grants, please ensure the following documents are included in your package submitted to EPA's contractor (Environmental Management Support, Inc.) or electronically through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and to the Regional Brownfields Contact listed in Section VII (on page 45).

Please label all attachments. For example:

*Attachment A: Letter from the State*

*Attachment B: Applicant Eligibility*

*Attachment C: Threshold Criteria*

*Attachment D: Leveraged Resources*

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transmittal Letter (2-page limit)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Factors Checklist (located in Appendix 3) attached to Transmittal Letter, if applicable (see Section IV.C.1.j)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Narrative Proposal, which includes the responses to ranking criteria (15-page limit)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentation of all applicable threshold criteria (see Section III. B and C)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Letter from the state or tribal environmental authority (see Section III.C.2.)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentation of applicant eligibility if other than city, county, state, or tribe (see Section III.C.1.)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentation indicating committed firm leveraged resources, if applicable (see Section V.B.2.c.)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Letters of Commitment from all community organizations identified in the Community Engagement and Partnerships ranking criteria (see Section V.B.3.)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Justification for requested waiver of the \$200,000 limit for a site-specific assessment, if applicable (see Section I.A.2.)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Property-Specific Determination request, if applicable (see Section III.C.4.d.)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Letters of commitment from assessment coalition members, if applicable (see section III.C.1.)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Petroleum eligibility determination information, if applicable (see Section III.C.3.i.)	

## I. COMMUNITY NEED

### I.a. Targeted Community and Brownfields

#### *I.a.i. Targeted Community Description*

- ☐ Did you include a brief description of your city, town, or geographic area?
- ☐ Did you provide background on the geographic area's cultural and industrial history?
- ☐ Did you establish the context for your brownfield challenges?
- ☐ Within this geographic area, did you identify and describe the targeted community, such as a neighborhood, district, corridor, census tract or other locality, where you plan to perform assessment activities?

#### *I.a.ii. Demographic Information*

- ☐ Did you provide demographic information about your targeted community?
- ☐ Did you provide data similar to that in the "Sample Format for Demographic Information" table on page 28?
- ☐ Did you supplement the demographic information table with other categories and relative comparative data? (not required)
- ☐ Did you clearly cite the sources of your data?

#### *I.a.iii. Brownfields*

- ☐ Did you describe your brownfields, as well as their proximity to and effect on your targeted community?
- ☐ Did you provide information about the nature and extent of your brownfields? For example, information on past land uses and site activities, potential environmental issues or contaminants, and current conditions.
- ☐ Did you discuss the real or perceived negative environmental impacts associated with the brownfields?

#### *I.a.iv. Cumulative Environmental Issues*

- ☐ Did you include a summary of the various cumulative environmental issues (e.g. siting of industry, power plants, incinerators, landfills, congested highways, or other sources of air, water and land pollution) or environmental justice concerns which may be present (such as overburdening from existing sources of pollution)?

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### I.b. Impacts on Targeted Community

Note: applicants are not required to develop new studies in order to respond to the criteria. Any information discussed and/or cited should reference existing available studies and data.

- ☐ Did you describe how issues in this section have resulted in disproportionate impact (e.g., health disparities) on the targeted community?

- ☐ Did you provide recent, relevant, cited data describing the threats to health or welfare of sensitive populations potentially subject to environmental exposures, including brownfields, in the targeted community?
  - ☐ Did you discuss impacts the brownfields have on public health or welfare of your targeted community?  
Impacts may include:
    - possible aggravation of public health issues, such as a greater than normal incidence of diseases or conditions (including cancer, asthma or birth defects) that may be associated with exposure to hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants resulting from cumulative environmental conditions, including brownfields;
    - social negatives such as blight, crime, vandalism, illegal dumping, people moving out, lack of neighborhood upkeep, lack of prosperity; or
    - other impacts on the general health and/or welfare of the targeted community.
  - ☐ Did you include citations for all data?
  - ☐ Coalition applicants – did you demonstrate that you, as the lead applicant, will serve coalition partners and communities that would otherwise not have access to resources to address brownfields?
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## I.c. Financial Need

### *I.c.i. Economic Conditions*

- ☐ Did you describe why you need this funding?
- ☐ Did you describe why you are unable to draw on other sources of funding for assessment of brownfield sites? Factors may include fiscal conditions, or population size, etc.
- ☐ Did you describe how local economic conditions might have been made worse due to industrial decline, plant closures, natural disasters, or other significant economic disruptions?

### *I.c.ii. Economic Effects of Brownfields*

- ☐ Did you elaborate on the demographic table in Section V.B.I.a (page 28) and provide context to the values presented?
  - ☐ Did you discuss the key economic effects of the brownfields on the targeted community (e.g. reduced tax base, lost jobs and business opportunities, depressed property values, ongoing costs to secure vacant properties, etc.)?
  - ☐ Did you describe the other economic effects associated with brownfields such as blight, property vacancy, community disinvestment, burden on municipal services, etc.?
  - ☐ To the extent possible, did you include quantitative estimates and statistics?
  - ☐ Did you include citations for all data?
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## 2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND FEASIBILITY OF SUCCESS

### 2.a. Project Description

#### 2.a.i. Project Description

- ☐ Did you describe the project that will be funded under this grant?
- ☐ Did you describe how the project aligns with the targeted community's land use and revitalization plans or vision?
- ☐ Did you describe the grant-funded assessment work planned with this funding?
- ☐ Did you describe the redevelopment strategy or projected redevelopment for the property or properties that are assessed?

#### 2.a.ii. Project Timing

- ☐ Did you describe a clear approach for implementing and executing key project activities within the 3-year period of performance?
- ☐ Specifically, did you address timing of contractor procurement, site selection, and site access?

#### 2.a.iii. Site Selection

- ☐ Community-wide and Coalition applicants – did you describe the process for prioritizing and selecting sites to assess, and for obtaining access to those sites?
  - ☐ Site-specific assessment applicants – did you describe the existing conditions of the subject property including anticipated levels of contamination, size, and/or status of ownership of the site?
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### 2.b. Task Description and Budget Table

*It is important to demonstrate that you understand the Brownfields Assessment Program process and the proposed work that will be accomplished with the grant funding. In preparing your project description, think about the following:*

- *What eligible assessment activities are needed to accomplish your project?*
- *What steps are necessary to implement your project?*
- *What deliverables/outputs will you produce?*
- *Who is involved in your project?*
- *If you named a contractor (including an individual consultant) as a project partner, did you demonstrate that you selected the partner in compliance with your jurisdiction's and federal competitive procurement procedures?*
- *What outreach methods will you use to communicate with the affected public/targeted community?*

#### 2.b.i. Task Description

- ☐ Did you list the tasks required to implement the proposed project?

- ☐ Did you describe the grant-funded work that will take place under each task?
- ☐ Did you include any supplemental work or services necessary to carry out the project that will be funded by sources other than this grant?
- ☐ Did you identify and enumerate specific outputs from the project?
  - Outputs may include, but are not limited to, Phase I environmental site assessments, Phase II environmental site assessments, site cleanup plans, area-wide plans, or site inventories.
- ☐ Did you provide a basis for cost estimates for each grant-funded task and value presented in the budget table?
  - Specifically, did you present unit costs and quantify work products (e.g., Contractual Costs: Conduct Phase I assessments on five sites at a cost of \$2,500 each for a total of \$12,500; Personnel Costs: \$45/hr x 20hrs = \$900.)
  - Did you explain any costs that appear to be atypical (i.e. unusually high or low)?
- ☐ If applying for both hazardous substance funding and petroleum funding, did you clearly distinguish and provide descriptions of both sources of funding?
- ☐ Did you exclude activities that are ineligible uses of funds under EPA's Assessment Grant?
- ☐ Are the majority of the funds allocated towards assessment related field activities?
- ☐ Site-specific applicants – did you demonstrate that the task descriptions and budget justify the need for requested grant funds?
- ☐ Coalition applicants – did you demonstrate that grant funds would address a minimum of five sites, as well as sites located in each coalition member's jurisdiction?

#### 2.b.ii. Budget Table

- ☐ Did you provide the information identified in the "Sample Format for Budget" on page 32?
- ☐ If applying for both hazardous substance funding and petroleum funding, did you clearly distinguish and provide budgets for both sources of funding?
- ☐ Are all of the proposed Project Tasks eligible activities only?
- ☐ Are all of the proposed tasks in the budget table for ONLY EPA grant-funded activities?
- ☐ Do all totals add up correctly?
- ☐ Did you exclude activities not supported by the grant from the budget table?

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#### 2.c. Ability to Leverage

- ☐ Did you describe other sources of funding/resources that you have to ensure the successful revitalization of brownfields sites assessed with this grant?
- ☐ Did you describe other sources of funding/resources that you may be seeking to ensure the successful revitalization of brownfields sites assessed with this grant?

- ☐ Do leveraged funding/resources include public and/or private resources (beyond this grant) to achieve assessment, cleanup, and/or redevelopment needs of brownfields sites?
  - ☐ Did you attach copies of documentation to this proposal for any “firm leveraged” resources identified in this section?
  - ☐ If you are not yet able to identify sources of leveraged funding, did you provide a recent example(s) where you or your project partners have successfully leveraged resources to achieve an environmental or revitalization goal of your community (not necessarily on a brownfields site)?
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### **3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS**

Community-wide applicants – Did you demonstrate how the whole community, not just localized groups directly affected by a site or sites, has provided input from the project inception and will be engaged throughout the project?

Site-Specific applicants – Did you discuss and demonstrate meaningful involvement of community groups or representatives directly affected by the site, in addition to the broader community?

Coalition applicants – Did you demonstrate how all communities addressed through this project have provided input from the beginning of the project, and will be engaged throughout the project?

Did you demonstrate that you, as the potential grant recipient, will ensure that community engagement is tailored specifically to the needs of each targeted community and coalition member?

#### **3.a. Plan for Involving Targeted Community & Other Stakeholders; and Communicating Project Progress**

##### ***3.a.i. Community Involvement Plan***

- ☐ Did you discuss your plan for involving the targeted community and other stakeholders in the planning and implementation of your project?

##### ***3.a.ii. Community Progress***

- ☐ Did you describe your plans for communicating the progress of your project to members of the community?
  - ☐ Did you explain how the identified communication plans appropriate for the targeted community and how you plan to address any communication barriers?
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### 3.b. Partnerships with Government Agencies

#### 3.b.i. Local/State/Tribal Environmental Authority

- ☐ Did you identify and clearly describe which agency runs the brownfields, voluntary or other similar cleanup program at the local/state/tribal level (i.e., the environmental agency and/or other health agency)?
- ☐ Did you include a description of the role the local/state/tribal environmental authority will play to ensure your brownfields project is successful?

#### 3.b.ii Other Relevant Governmental Partnerships

- ☐ Did you identify and provide information on other relevant federal, state and/or local governmental agencies with which you will partner during your assessment project?
  - ☐ Did you include a a description of the role other relevant governmental agencies will play to ensure your brownfields project is successful?
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### 3.c. Partnerships with Community Organizations

#### 3.c.i. Community Organization Description & Role

- ☐ Do the organizations identified fit within the Brownfield program's definition of a Community Organization (CO)?
- ☐ Did you describe your current efforts and plans to initiate and develop partnerships with community organizations?
- ☐ Did you discuss how the COs will be involved in the planning and implementation of your project?
- ☐ Did you include a brief description of each CO?
- ☐ Did you discuss the role of each CO and how they will be involved in your proposed project?

#### 3.c.ii. Letters of Commitment

- ☐ Did you attach a current letter from each CO identified in this section of your narrative?
  - ☐ Does each CO letter affirm the role and commitment to your project/program?
  - ☐ If COs do not exist in your area, did you demonstrate how the community is engaged and involved in your project?
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## 4. PROJECT BENEFITS

### 4.a. Health and/or Welfare and Environment

#### 4.a.i. Health and/or Welfare Benefits

- ☐ Did you describe the health *and/or* welfare benefits anticipated from this grant (or broader project)?
- ☐ Did you describe how these benefits will address the health *and/or* welfare challenges discussed in the Community Need?

#### 4.a.ii. Environmental Benefits

- ☐ Did you describe the environmental benefits anticipated from this grant (or broader project)?
  - ☐ Did you describe how these environmental benefits will address the environmental challenges discussed in the Community Need?
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### 4.b. Environmental Benefits from Infrastructure Reuse/Sustainable Reuse

#### 4.b.i. Planning, Policies, and Other Tools

- ☐ Did you describe and provide examples on how your community or organization is using planning, policies, ordinances or other tools to foster and implement sustainable redevelopment?

#### 4.b.ii. Integrating Equitable Development or Livability Principles

- ☐ Did you describe how your approach to revitalizing sites in the targeted community incorporated equitable development practices or livability principles?
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### 4.c. Economic and Community Benefits

#### 4.c.i. Economic or Non-Economic Benefits

Notice the “or” language – you only have to respond to one category. However, it is acceptable to respond to both categories if you have discussed both economic and non-economic challenges in your proposal.

- ☐ Did you discuss specific economic benefits, such as increased employment and expanded tax base, from the redevelopment of sites assessed under this grant?

**OR**

- ☐ Did you discuss non-economic benefits associated with sites to be reused for greenspace or other not-for-profit activities?

#### 4.c.ii. Job Creation Potential with Workforce Development Programs

- ☐ Did you describe any planned efforts to promote local hiring and procurement, or link members of the community to potential employment opportunities in brownfields assessment, cleanup, or redevelopment related to your proposed projects?
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## 5. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

### 5.a. Programmatic Capability

- ☐ Did you describe the organizational structure you will utilize to ensure the timely and successful expenditure of funds and completion of all technical, administrative and financial requirements of the project and grant?
  - ☐ Did you include a brief discussion of the key staff including their roles, expertise, qualifications, and experience?
  - ☐ Did you describe the system(s) you have in place to appropriately acquire any additional expertise and resources (e.g. contractors or subawardees) required to successfully complete the project?
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### 5.b. Audit Findings

- ☐ Did you describe any adverse audit findings and how the problem was corrected?
  - ☐ If you have not had any adverse audit findings, did you state that there were no adverse findings?
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### 5.c. Past Performance and Accomplishments

*\*Respond to the correct category\**

#### 5.c.i. If you currently or have ever received an EPA Brownfields Grant

- ☐ Did you identify the EPA Brownfields grant(s) you currently have or have received in the past?
- ☐ Did you provide information on no more than 5 of your most recent grants?
- ☐ Did you demonstrate how you successfully managed the grant(s), and successfully performed all phases of work, including whether each grant by providing information on the following:

#### *Compliance with grant requirements*

- ☐ Did you provide information regarding your compliance with the:
  - work plan,
  - schedule, and
  - terms and conditions?
- ☐ Did you explain progress made, or are making, towards achieving the expected results/outputs under the grants?
- ☐ If you did not make progress towards achieving the expected results/outputs, did you explain why not, what corrective measures were taken, and how measures were documented and communicated with EPA?
- ☐ Did you discuss your history of timely and acceptable quarterly performance and technical reporting, as well as, ongoing ACRES reporting?

*For each open EPA Brownfields Assessment, RLF, and Cleanup grant(s):*

- ☐ Did you explain your need for additional funding?
- ☐ Did you include the grant period (start and end date)?
- ☐ Did you indicate if there are funds remaining on the grant?
- ☐ Did you discuss your plan for expending the remaining funds by the end of the grant period?

*For each closed EPA Brownfields Assessment, RLF, and Cleanup grant(s):*

- ☐ Did you indicate if there were funds remaining at the time the grant closed?
- ☐ Did you include the amount of remaining funds?
- ☐ Did you include a brief explanation of why the funds were not expended?

*Accomplishments*

- ☐ Did you describe the accomplishments and specific outputs of your grant-funded program?
  - ☐ Did you discuss whether these outputs and outcomes were accurately reflected in ACRES at the time of this proposal submission? If they were not, did you explain why?
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5.c.ii. If you have not received an EPA Brownfields Grant but have received other federal and/or non-federal assistance agreements

- ☐ Did you identify and describe each of your current and/or most recent federally and non-federally funded grants that are most similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project?
- ☐ Did you provide information on no more than 5 of your most recent grants?
- ☐ Demonstrate how you successfully managed the grant(s), and successfully performed all phases of work under each grant by providing information on the following:

*Purpose and Accomplishments*

- ☐ For each grant, did you describe the:
  - awarding agency/organization,
  - amount of funding, and
  - purpose of the grant(s)?
- ☐ For projects supported by these grants, did you discuss the specific accomplishments including the outputs, outcomes, and specific measures of success?

*Compliance with grant requirements*

- ☐ Did you describe your compliance with the
  - work plan,
  - schedule, and
  - terms and conditions?

- ☐ Did you describe whether you made, or are making, sufficient progress towards achieving the expected results of the grant in a timely manner?
  - ☐ If you did not make progress towards achieving the expected results, did you explain why not, what corrective measures were taken, and how measures were documented and communicated with awarding agency/organization?
  - ☐ Did you discuss your history of timely and acceptable reporting, as required by the awarding agency/organization?
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5.c.iii. If you have never received any type of federal or non-federal assistance agreements

- ☐ Did you affirm that your organization has never received any type of federal or non-federal assistant agreement (grant)?
-