

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

The mission of the Institute for Conservation Leadership is to strengthen organizations and their leaders working on behalf of the environment. For more than ten years, the Institute has provided training and technical assistance to local, regional, state, and national environmental groups across the country. The Institute's services address the entire spectrum of organizational development and leadership needs, including conducting workshops on such topics as recruiting and motivating volunteers, board development, fundraising, strategic planning, and coalition building. Institute staff also facilitate multi-stakeholder groups and assist in the development of networks.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE APPLICATION

What is Project XL?

Project XL is a national pilot program that tests innovative ways of achieving better and more cost-effective public health and environmental protection. Through site-specific agreements with project sponsors, EPA is gathering data and project experience that will help the Agency redesign current approaches to environmental and public health protection. Project sponsors—private facilities, industry sectors, Federal facilities, and communities—can implement their own innovative strategies that produce superior environmental performance, replace specific regulatory requirements, policies, or procedures, and promote greater accountability to stakeholders. As of April 1998, seven pilot experiments are being implemented and twenty additional projects are being developed. Direct participant stakeholder groups may apply for up to \$25,000 to meet a technical assistance need.

Technical Assistance Project Vision Statement

The Technical Assistance Project will help build the capacity of direct participants to take part in Project XL stakeholder groups.¹ The Institute for Conservation Leadership manages the project as part of its cooperative agreement with EPA to help provide technical assistance to direct participants of stakeholder groups active in Project XL.

The availability of technical assistance in multi-stakeholder processes can be a key component to the success of XL projects. The Technical Assistance Project will provide funding to direct participants in XL projects to help:

1. Address the disparity of resources that exists for some direct participants in XL projects, especially community-based groups, small local units of government, and worker groups;
2. Help empower direct participant stakeholders to make independent and informed decisions in the context of a collaborative process;
3. Strengthen direct participants' ability to be viable players in Project XL;
4. Improve the understanding of complex technical issues so direct participants can clarify their common understandings, agreements, and disagreements;
5. Promote credible and open meeting processes and good decision making within Project XL stakeholder groups; and
6. Facilitate experimentation with new stakeholder involvement processes which may arise as a result of Project XL.

The Technical Assistance Project is offered as a voluntary program to those who choose to participate in it.

¹ The Technical Assistance Project defines a stakeholder group as including communities near the project, local, state, or tribal governments, businesses, worker groups, environmental, environmental justice, and other public interest groups, EPA, the sponsoring organization, or other similar entities. Stakeholders include those in proximity to the project and those interested in the broader implementation of the concepts being tested in the project, such as state, regional, or national environmental groups.

Stakeholders are grouped into three categories:

- Direct participants are involved in the day-to-day negotiations: they influence the design and development of projects: their views strongly influence both the details of and EPA's ultimate decision to approve or not approve the project.
- Commentors have an interest but do not directly participate in project development or approval. They provide input at designated points in the process.
- The general public has clear access to information on development and environmental results of the project.

The direct participant stakeholders of a project need a technical assistance provider to do an air emissions model to evaluate changes in an affected region.

A sponsoring business of an XL project maintains that many regulations it is required to meet are redundant. The direct participant stakeholder group needs technical assistance to assess the environmental and community impact of an alternative regulatory scheme.

The direct participant stakeholders of a project decide that the amount of emissions and permit limits are not the key concern to them. Their concern is the impact of emissions on the community. In response, the state conducts a health risk analysis. The stakeholder group needs a technical assistance provider who interprets and evaluates the findings.

What kinds of technical assistance can this money support?

Understanding Technical Issues

- Baseline measurement of current environmental performance
- Economic and demographic analysis
- Facility comparison analysis
- Risk and risk assessment

Interpreting and Evaluating

- Process engineering data and facility modeling data
- Data necessary for XL project development and/or implementation
- Data indicating agreed upon interim milestones
- Third party technical opinions

Facilitating the Stakeholder Group Process

- Meeting facilitation and mediation
- Training related to multi-cultural and cross-cultural issues
- Written or verbal translation to address language differences
- Measures to make the XL process accessible to persons with disabilities (excluding structural/building projects)
- Understanding the historical context of local environmental issues that are currently and directly related to the project

Other Professional Experience

- Environmental indicators
- Environmental management systems
- Confidentiality
- Statutory structures
- Expert national or state perspectives and thinking on critical environmental issues that have a direct relationship to the success of the project

Other categories of technical assistance are not precluded. The Institute will determine the suitability of the request based upon the parameters of the EPA and Technical Assistance Project Steering Committee guidelines.

Conditions for Technical Assistance

Successful applications will meet the following conditions:

1. The application was submitted by the direct participant stakeholder group.
2. This request for funding is the stakeholder group's last resort for technical assistance; other options have been pursued.
3. All the direct participants were involved in determining the need for technical assistance.
4. All the direct participants were given an opportunity to actively participate in the decision to request technical assistance.
5. The direct participant stakeholder group made the decision for technical assistance by consensus or majority.
6. All the direct participants agreed on the selected technical assistance provider.
7. The direct participant group has done an overall needs assessment in the last three months.
8. Local resources and resources within the direct participant group have been fully explored prior to submitting this application.
9. This application addresses a specific task to be completed by a technical assistance provider.
10. The direct participant stakeholder group has made a strong case for how the technical assistance will make a difference for the success of the project.
11. The requested technical assistance will help the direct participants make independent and informed decisions.
12. The stated timeframe to complete the task is realistic.
13. The budget for this task is reasonable and appropriate.

EXAMPLES OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The direct participant stakeholders examine the possibility of a local company treating a large water source rather than a few smaller ones that it is required to treat. The large water source has a substantial impact on the local environment. The stakeholder group needs a technical assistance provider to explain the effects of this change on the surrounding wetlands and on local wildlife.

A direct participant stakeholder group hits an impasse after several months of hard work and having developed good relationships. One member, who has taken a lead in coordinating and facilitating the effort, has family and work commitments that prevent him from continuing to play that role. The group decides work cannot progress without assistance. An outside facilitator is needed to monitor the communication process and to facilitate the meetings.

Project XL – Technical Assistance Application

To meet the conditions for technical assistance, direct participant stakeholder groups must demonstrate that they have completed an overall needs assessment. Please use other sheets of paper to answer the following questions and attach them to this application. Also attach a completed Stakeholder Group Needs Assessment Chart (*see page 7*).

If you have any questions, contact the Institute for Conservation Leadership at 301-270-2900; email: peter@icl.org or dianne@icl.org. Please return your completed application to the Institute for Conservation Leadership, 6930 Carroll Avenue, Suite 420, Takoma Park, MD 20912.

1. Name of project sponsor
2. Name of contact person(s) for the stakeholder group
3. Address
4. City, State, Zip
5. Phone/Fax/Email
6. Before completing this application, direct participant stakeholder groups must have first explored all local resources to meet their technical assistance need. Are any local resources or financial assistance being used by the direct participant stakeholder group to meet this technical assistance need? If yes, please list the sources providing assistance. If no, please list the sources that you have approached for assistance.
7. Describe the specific task(s) that your direct participant stakeholder group is requesting as technical assistance.
8. How will this technical assistance make a difference in the success of the project?
9. How much money are you requesting to complete the technical assistance task(s)? The amount cannot exceed \$25,000.
10. How have the direct participants been involved in completing the needs assessment? Please attach a completed Needs Assessment Chart (page 7). The needs assessment must have been completed within the last three months.
11. Please identify your selected technical assistance provider. Include the provider's name, address, and resume.
12. How did the group select the requested technical assistance provider?
13. What is the timeframe to complete the requested task(s)?

Stakeholder Group Needs Assessment Chart

Support for technical assistance is offered through the Institute for Conservation Leadership to direct participant stakeholder groups that have exhausted all possibilities to secure resources locally. In order to understand how a stakeholder group's specific technical assistance request fits into its overall needs assessment, we ask that you complete this chart as part of the application process.

A technical assistance needs assessment is a valuable process whereby a group takes stock of its work to date and decides what technical assistance is needed to make its work more productive. A needs assessment can be done at any point in an XL project, but this chart must be completed with information from a needs assessment completed within the last three months. *Please copy this chart for as many needs as your direct participants have identified. If your stakeholder group has this information in another document, you may attach it to the application rather than completing the enclosed chart.*

Example: In the hypothetical community of Sandy Spring, a large manufacturer convened a stakeholder group and members identified their needs and resources. The chart below shows three examples of those needs. The first two needs are examples where the group found and utilized local resources. The third example would be a potential case where Institute support for technical assistance may be merited.

	EXAMPLE #1	EXAMPLE #2	EXAMPLE #3
Identified need	<i>What are the baseline measurements for environmental performance related to this type of manufacturing?</i>	<i>What are some best practice examples from facilities that parallel the same manufacturing process?</i>	<i>What is an easily understood way to describe the amount of air emissions from the manufacturing plant?</i>
Technical assistance sought to meet this need	<i>An expert who can explain the baseline measurement, define technical terms, and answer questions that relate specifically to this project and the baseline measurements.</i>	<i>A person or organization that is familiar with best practices in similar domestic or international manufacturing facilities and can discuss them in detail.</i>	<i>A person who can research and make comparisons using things that are familiar to stakeholders (such as car emissions, fireplace emissions, etc.) and can discuss the advantages and disadvantages of such a comparison.</i>
Resources to meet this need were provided by	<i>State Environmental Office</i>	<i>Project sponsor is willing to provide funding to support outside assistance.</i>	<i>No resources available.</i>
If technical assistance need still exists, what local resources have been requested	<i>Not applicable; need met.</i>	<i>The state university. Jane Smith, Consultant; request pending.</i>	<i>No local assistance identified. Need technical assistance provider and financial resources.</i>

Stakeholder Group Needs Assessment Chart

Please complete a Needs Assessment for each need identified by the stakeholder group. Make copies of this page as needed.

NAME OF PROJECT SPONSOR

DATE NEEDS ASSESSMENT COMPLETED

IDENTIFIED NEED

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SOUGHT TO MEET THIS NEED

RESOURCES TO MEET THIS NEED WERE PROVIDED BY
--

IF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEED STILL EXISTS, WHAT LOCAL RESOURCES HAVE BEEN REQUESTED?
--

IDENTIFIED NEED

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SOUGHT TO MEET THIS NEED

RESOURCES TO MEET THIS NEED WERE PROVIDED BY
--

IF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEED STILL EXISTS, WHAT LOCAL RESOURCES HAVE BEEN REQUESTED?
--

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