

Winning EPA Brownfield Grants Tips & Tricks for Success Writing Tips & Tricks



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NJIT TAB

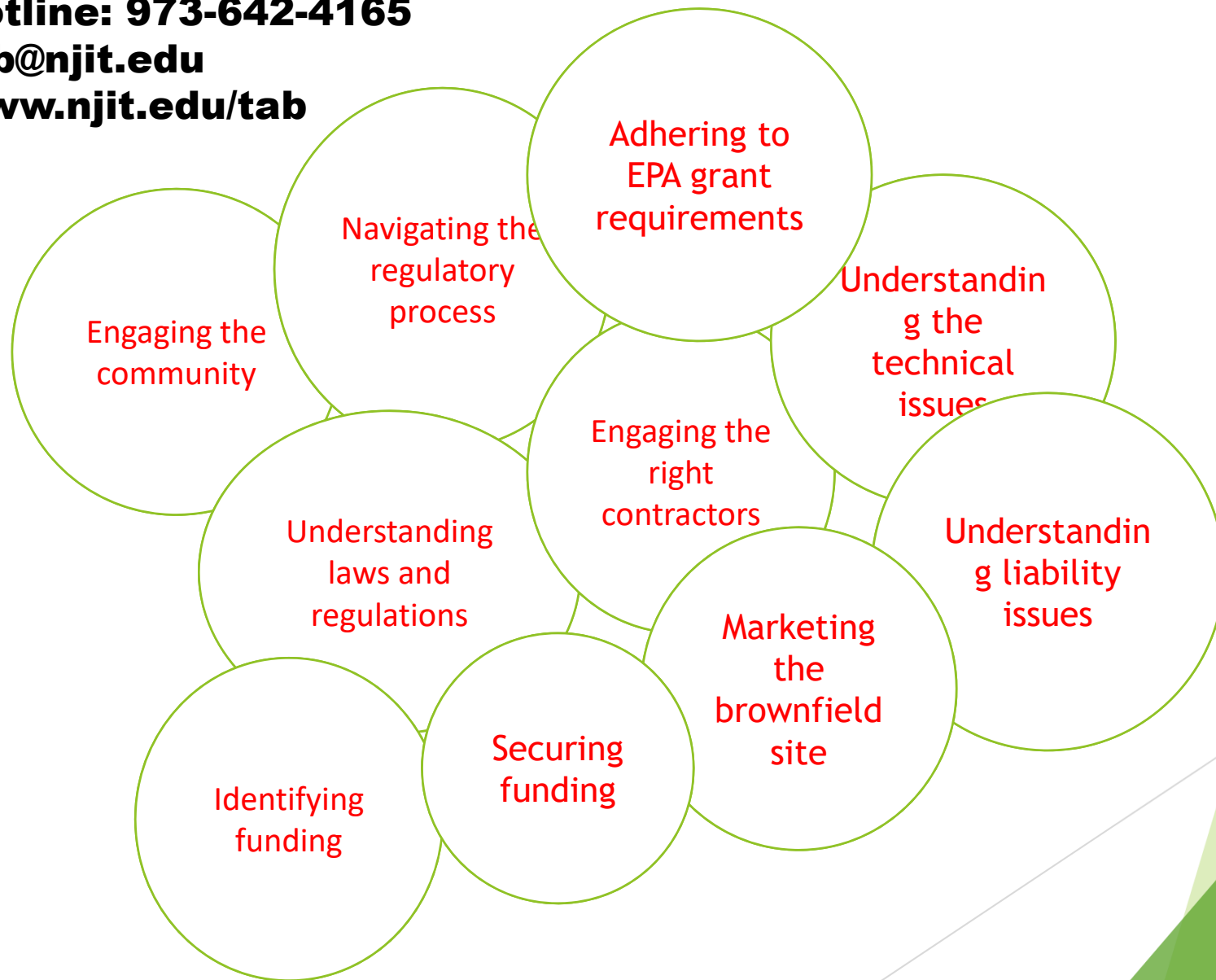
Bethlehem, PA
October 3, 2018

HELP!!!

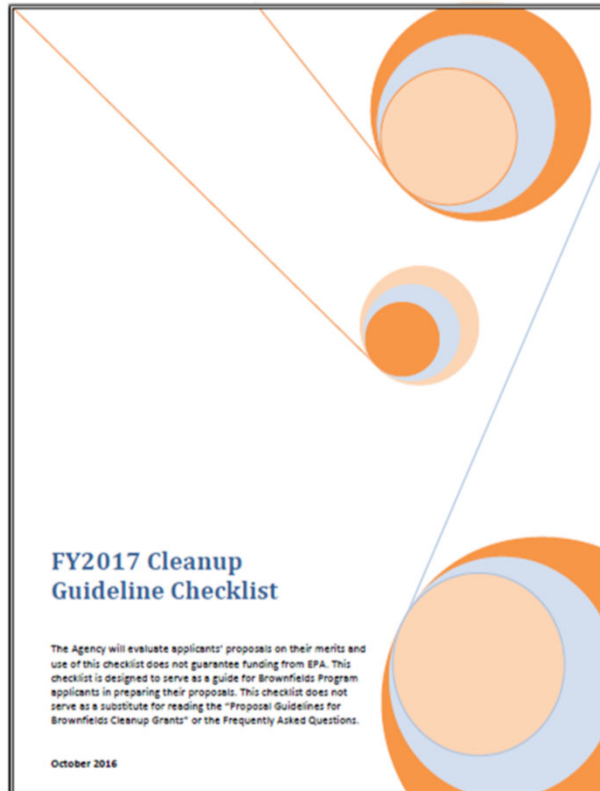
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Proposal Writing Resources



- Office of Brownfields & Land Revitalization Website

www.epa.gov/brownfields/apply-brownfields-grant-funding

- ▶ Summary of Brownfields ARC Guidelines Changes
- ▶ ARC Guidelines Checklist
- ▶ Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- ▶ Grants.gov Tip Sheet
- ▶ Regional Information Sessions

- Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB)
- TAB EZ: A Grant Writing Tool

Changes - What's New?



What's
new?

- ▶ RFP October 2018?
- ▶ Until the guidelines are issued, **NOTHING** is final, but here is what NJIT TAB is hearing:
- ▶ 10 pages max
- ▶ Support/Commitment Letters not required
- ▶ Demographic Tables not required
- ▶ The total amount of funding available for MAC grants in FY19 will be similar to FY18.
- ▶ 5% Administrative Costs

Changes - What's New?

Assessment Grant changes

- Nonprofits can apply for assessment grants.
- Proposals will not need to apportion the amount requested between Petroleum and Hazardous Substances.
- Assessment funds can be used for a wider array of planning activities - including market analyses and market evaluations.

Changes - What's New?

Cleanup Grant changes

- Cleanup grant funding will be increased to \$500K per proposal.
- Each proposal may contain multiple sites, but entities will be limited to 1 cleanup proposal in each fiscal year.
- Cost Share waivers will continue to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, however, only tribes, non-profits, and local governments with populations of 50,000 or less will be considered.

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Changes - What's New?



What's
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Multipurpose Grants

- Multipurpose grants are new grants designed to combine assessment and cleanup into one grant.
- The maximum funding about will be \$800K per proposal and will require a \$40,000 cost-share (in-kind matches are acceptable).
- EPA intends to award up to 10 multipurpose grants nationally.
- Entities applying for a multipurpose grant cannot apply for assessment and/or cleanup grants in the same year.
- To be eligible for a multipurpose grant, at a minimum, you must own at least 1 site when you submit your proposal (you can acquire additional sites after the proposal is submitted).
- At a minimum, each multipurpose grant proposal must include at least one Phase II, one cleanup, and one plan for revitalization.

Developing a Grant Program that Works for YOU and Appeals to EPA

- What is your story?
- Develop a specific focus to your grant program that is based on the unique needs of your community - generic doesn't get funded
- Should be an intersection of:
 - ❑ Community Needs
 - ❑ Community Benefits



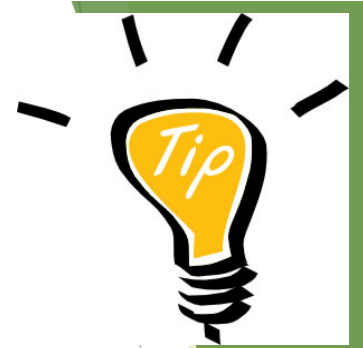
TIP: Assessment Grants



The best assessment grant applications involve projects where:

- ❑ Already identified a target area in need of assessment
- ❑ Already have an relationship with existing community in target area
- ❑ Already have site access to some properties in target area
- ❑ Significant redevelopment/revitalization potential in target area

TIP: Cleanup Grants



The best cleanup grant applications are for projects where:

- ❑ You own the property (Can NOT be a Responsible Party)
- ❑ Site is characterized and remediation plan and cost estimates are complete
- ❑ Leveraging of additional funds is committed
- ❑ Redevelopment Plan is established
- ❑ Community supports redevelopment

To Do List



- ☐ Review the MAC Guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions
- ☐ Review summary of changes document
- ☐ For current grantees: cleanup your outstanding reporting requirements
- ☐ For site specific applications: vet site eligibility

To Do List



- ❑ Build your team NOW!
 - ❑ Identify partners that would be key to implementing your grant program
 - ❑ Are there any community based organizations, non-profits, economic development corporations?
 - ❑ Who are the neighborhood or community groups around the targeted sites/area?
 - ❑ LEVERAGE - What other resources will be needed to see the project to redevelopment?
Discuss with prospective funders



To Do List



■ Get your paper on!

- Letter from State environmental regulatory agency
- For site specific petroleum assessment or cleanup proposals: State petroleum eligibility letter is needed.

For State Acknowledgement Letter: For Petroleum Eligibility:

Troy Conrad
PADEP Land Recycling Program
PO Box 8471
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8471
Phone: (717) 783-9480
Fax: 717-772-5598
tconrad@pa.gov

Noreen Wagner
PADEP Storage Tanks and Hazardous
Sites Cleanup
PO Box 8471
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8471
Phone: (717) 783-9284
Fax: 717-772-5598
nwagner@pa.gov

To Do List



- ❑ Cleanup Grants:
 - ❑ AAI / Secure ownership
 - ❑ Complete the site's Phase II investigation
 - ❑ Prepare Draft Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives document (ABCA)
 - ❑ Review requirements and begin public notification/comment period
 - ❑ Work on detailed cost estimate for cleanup activities
 - ❑ Identify and secure funding source for 20% match requirement and any balance of funding needed for cleanups that will cost more than the grant you are seeking.

Tips and Tricks

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



#1 Piece of Advice



TIPS

Tips and Tricks

- ❑ Get an “outside” editor
- ❑ Decide what your story is. How is your community different from other applicants?
- ❑ Clearly define your priorities and weave it throughout your application
- ❑ Keep extraneous stuff out; it distracts from your story (No graphics or photos)
- ❑ Keep it real - make sure your assertions are backed up with data and/or examples
- ❑ If you don't know what something is, don't just skip it! Check out EPA's Frequently Asked Questions



TIPS

Tips and Tricks

- ❑ Make sure that what you want to do is eligible, and that it fits in with what the program is looking to fund.
- ❑ Make sure that the timeframe works for you and for the funding program. Can your project wait until funding is available?
- ❑ Tell a story: what ills will the brownfield program strategy you have developed correct? Collect data to support your story and strategic approach.
- ❑ Be specific, do not be vague in ranking criteria section.
- ❑ Make sure your proposed grant funding activities are realistic and can be implemented, both logistically as well as on a cost basis.



TIPS

Link Your Story Together

❑ Community Need

- ❑ Here are the brownfields issues in my target area and who I'm trying to help with this grant

❑ Project Description & Feasibility of Success

- ❑ Here's my step-by-step plan for the grant, what I'm going to spend the money on, and where I'm going to get the rest of money to get to redevelopment

❑ Community Engagement & Partnerships

- ❑ Here's my step-by-step plan for how my partners and I will engage the community in this project and involve them in the decisions being made

❑ Project Benefits

- ❑ Here are the anticipated outcomes and how my target area will benefit from redeveloping the brownfields sites

❑ Programmatic Capability & Past Performance

- ❑ Here is my demonstrated ability to successfully manage the grant and produce the measurable results discussed in the proposal

Q&A



Question and Answer Break

Community Need

Target Area Description Strategies

- ❑ Clearly define target project/communities
- ❑ Describe in detail the type brownfields you are going to address.
- ❑ Based on the types of contaminants, find specific health related statistics.
- ❑ **Quantify, quantify, quantify.**

Community Need

Financial Need Strategies:

- ❑ Be sure to be consistent with defined targeted community.
- ❑ Talk about region / community-specific issues that increase costs (i.e. higher transportation costs, higher utility costs...). Drill down to targeted Census Tracts, if need be.
- ❑ Talk about budget slashing measures that have been implemented - public sector layoffs, small staffs, or reductions in services.
- ❑ Talk about the great need for additional brownfield cleanups, and the lack of budget in your small towns for this work.

Project Description and Feasibility of Success

Describe the project you are proposing to be funded under this grant and how the project fits in with the targeted community's needs as well as demonstrate that you have a reasonable approach to reach your project goals, reasonable costs and the capacity implement the program.

- ❑ Project Description, Timing, and Implementation
- ❑ Task Descriptions and Budget
- ❑ Ability to Leverage

Project Description & Feasibility of Success (Assessment)

1. Project Description

This is where you get to pitch your project! Describe:

- ❑ All the activities that will be conducted with the grant funds
- ❑ How the project aligns with your overall redevelopment plans
- ❑ How you will incorporate equitable development or sustainable practices
- ❑ The plans for redevelopment of your proposed properties
- ❑ How you will make use of existing infrastructure

Project Description & Feasibility of Success (Assessment)

2. Timing and Implementation

Describe how the activities will be implemented and executed in the three-year project period, and discuss who will be responsible for conducting these activities

- a) Contractor procurement
- b) **Site Selections** (varies by assessment grant type)

Community-wide proposals should discuss the development of a site inventory/site identification process, and site prioritization and selection process.

Coalition proposals should demonstrate how the grant funds will address a minimum of five sites as well as sites located in each coalition member's jurisdiction.

Site-specific proposals should describe the existing conditions of the subject property.

- c) Obtaining and securing site access

Project Description & Feasibility of Success (Cleanup)

1. Existing Conditions

- ❑ Describe: existing conditions of the property, extent of contamination, current uses and any buildings onsite

2. Proposed Cleanup Plan

- ❑ Describe proposed cleanup plan and methods **consistent with the draft ABCA**

3. Alignment with Revitalization Plans

- ❑ How the project aligns with your overall redevelopment plans
- ❑ How you will incorporate equitable development or sustainable practices
- ❑ The plans for redevelopment of your proposed properties
- ❑ How you will make use of existing infrastructure

Project Description & Feasibility of Success

Budget and Task Descriptions

Narrative and Budget table are required.

- ❑ List the tasks required to implement the project
- ❑ Distinguish between the work you and your contractors will perform
- ❑ Discuss if any additional work or services are needed to carry out the project
- ❑ Identify and enumerate specific project outputs
- ❑ Provide cost estimate and basis for each grant-funded task

Cleanup Applicants: Describe only eligible cost share activities

Assessment Budget - EXAMPLE

| Budget Categories (programmatic costs only) | Project Tasks | | | | | Total |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------|
| | Program Management | Community Outreach | Phase I Assessments | Phase II Assessments | Cleanup Planning | |
| Personnel | 10,000 | 10,000 | | | | 20,000 |
| Fringe Benefits | | | | | | |
| Travel ¹ | 5,000 | | | | | 5,000 |
| Equipment ² | | | | | | |
| Supplies | | | | | | |
| Contractual ³ | | 15,000 | 30,000 | 110,000 | 20,000 | 175,000 |
| Other (specify) | | | | | | |
| Total | 15,000 | 25,000 | 30,000 | 110,000 | 20,000 | 200,000 |

Label Tasks

Task Description EXAMPLE - Task 1: Program Management

- **Personnel:** Community Planner - \$50/hour * 200 hours = \$10,000
- **Travel:** Attend 1 Regional Conference: \$1,000 + Nat'l Brownfield Conference: \$4,000 = \$5,000

Cleanup Budget - EXAMPLE

| Budget Categories (programmatic costs only) | Project Tasks | | | | |
|--|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| | Program Management | State Oversight | Cleanup | Community Outreach | Total |
| Personnel | 10,000 | | | 5,000 | 15,000 |
| Fringe Benefits | | | | | |
| Travel ¹ | | | | | |
| Equipment ² | | | | | |
| Supplies | 5,000 | | | | 5,000 |
| Contractual ³ | | 10,000 | 165,000 | 5,000 | 180,000 |
| Other (specify) | | | | | |
| Total | 15,000 | 10,000 | 165,000 | 10,000 | 200,000 |
| Cost Share⁴ | 10,000 | | 20,000 | 10,000 | 40,000 |
| Total Budget | 25,000 | 10,000 | 185,000 | 20,000 | 240,000 |

Cost Share

Describe only eligible cost share activities

Project Description and Feasibility of Success

Leveraging Strategies:

- ❑ Use real funds and make the connection of how you will leverage it.
- ❑ Talk about funding to take a project through the entire process to include redevelopment; cite funding sources available for this work and the timeframe / likelihood of securing these funds. Make sure each source is tied to the targeted program/projects.
- ❑ Spend some time getting letters of commitment from grantors, financial institutions, developers with numbers!
- ❑ For existing grantees: use examples of past project leveraging to demonstrate ability to leverage (and indicate if such funding sources are likely to be used moving forward).

Community Engagement & Partnerships

1. Engaging the Community

- ❑ Know the difference between ENGAGING the public and INFORMING the public

Cleanup Applicants: Describe the plan for addressing residents' health, safety, and disruption concerns; and, protecting sensitive populations and nearby residents.

- ❑ Describe plan for involving affected community during in the planning and implementation of your project.
- ❑ Describe a plan for communicating progress to the community members.
 - ❑ How will you keep the community engaged?
 - ❑ Why is this the best approach?

Community Engagement & Partnerships

2. Partnerships with Governmental Agencies

- ❑ Identify and provide information on:
 - ❑ local/state/tribal environmental agency which implements the brownfields program
 - ❑ other relevant governmental agencies
 - ❑ Examples include DOT, EPA, HUD
 - ❑ Include the health agency if applicable
- ❑ Describe the role they will play in your project/program

**Plans to enroll in the
state/local/tribal voluntary
response programs**

Community Engagement & Partnerships

3. Partnerships with Community Organizations: Community Organization Description & Role

- ❑ Describe community organizations and their role in the planning and implementation.
- ❑ If no community organizations exist, the state this and demonstrate how the community has been and will continue to be engaged.



Target schools and colleges, churches, labor groups, environmental groups, cultural interest groups, civic groups, advocacy groups, community development organizations, chambers of commerce, etc.

Focus of this section is on community organizations, NOT governmental organizations, local municipal departments, or political members.

Involve partners that are relevant to your project plans.

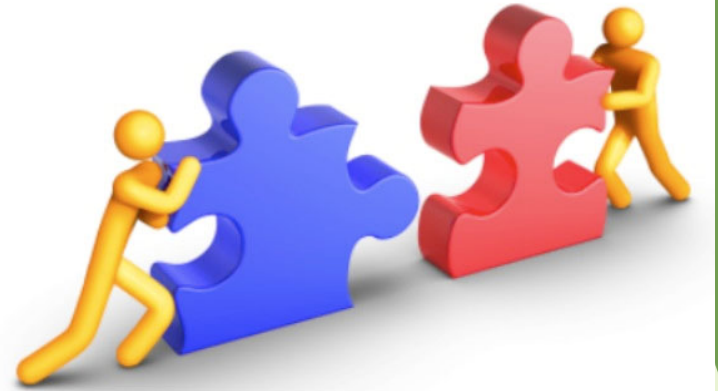
Community Engagement & Partnerships

4. Partnerships with Workforce Development Programs

- ❑ Describe any planned efforts to promote local hiring and procurement or to link members of the community to potential employment opportunities.
 - ❑ Guidelines include a link to listing of Brownfields Job Training Grantees



Project Benefits: Welfare, Environmental, and Public Health



- ❑ Tie the benefits into the Community Needs expressed, the Program Description, and the outcomes.
- ❑ How will the benefits be achieved?

Project Benefits: Economic and Community

Strategies:

- ❑ Generate specific numbers on jobs created and taxes generated. Extrapolate, if need be.
- ❑ Tie the benefits into the Community Needs expressed, the Program Description, and the outcomes.
- ❑ **QUANTIFY, QUANTIFY, QUANTIFY.**
- ❑ Identify how your program will provide a linkage to EPA funds expended and job opportunities
- ❑ If your project doesn't involve greenspace, don't introduce it here.

Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

Demonstrate that your organization has programmatic capability and a reasonable approach to ensure successful completion of all required aspects of this project

- ❑ Audit Findings
 - ❑ Applicant must state that there is no adverse audit
- ❑ Programmatic Capability
 - ❑ Demonstrate ability to manage grant and oversee the proposed work
 - ❑ Demonstrate sufficient personnel resources and capability to complete the project in a timely manner
- ❑ Measuring Environmental Results
 - ❑ Discuss your plan to track, measure and evaluate progress.

Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

Past Performance & Accomplishments

Three categories from which to choose:

Applicants who are past/present Brownfields grantees

- OR -

Applicants who are not past/present Brownfields grantees but have received other federal/non-federal assistance agreements

- OR -

Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

Past Performance and Accomplishments

Past/present Brownfields Grantees

Describe:

- ❑ Accomplishments (specific outputs and outcomes) on the most recent five grants
- ❑ Compliance with workplan, schedule, and terms and conditions
- ❑ Corrective action for past grant management issues
- ❑ Discuss history of timely and acceptable reporting of deliverables, including ACRES
- ❑ Funding expenditure and need for additional funding

Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

Past Performance and Accomplishments

Applicants having received other assistance

Describe:

- ❑ The awarding agency/organization, amount and purpose of funding
- ❑ Accomplishments (specific outputs and outcomes) of projects in similar scope and no more than five
- ❑ Compliance with workplan, schedule, and terms and conditions
- ❑ Corrective action for past grant management issues
- ❑ Discuss history of timely and acceptable reporting

Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

Past Performance and Accomplishments

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

- ❑ Affirm that your organization has never received any type of federal or non-federal assistance agreements
- ❑ Will receive a neutral score

Useful Tip

- ❑ **Link Your Story Together: Programmatic Capability & Past Performance**
 - ❑ Here is my demonstrated ability to successfully manage the grant and produce the measurable results discussed in the proposal.

Respond to the correct
*Past Performance &
Accomplishments* criterion

Thank you!

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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