

Brownfields at Work

Preparing a Successful Job Training Grant

August 11, 2026

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Mid-Atlantic TAB is here to help with any questions you may have throughout your brownfield journey- And our services are FREE!

We have teams across Region 3 who offer their own services and specialties.

We're ready to assist you with your brownfield projects!

Today's Agenda

Let's Get to Know Each Other - Introductions

Overview of the Brownfields Job Training (BFJT) Program

- Purpose and successes + Skills and Jobs Supported + FY2027 Solicitation
- **Stories and lessons learned from Grantees – Auberle and Center for Nonprofit Advancement**

Drafting a Compelling Grant Application – Tips and Best Practices

- Defining and demonstrating need
- Responding to need – Training development and Program Structure
- Cultivating and maintaining partnerships
- Budget development
- Common challenges and pain points
- **Stories and lessons learned from Grantees – Auberle and Center for Nonprofit Advancement**

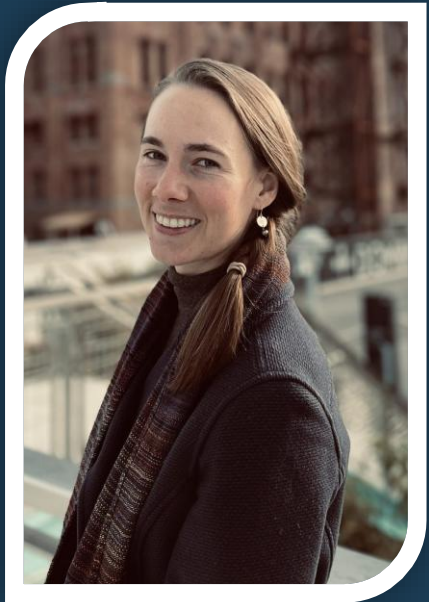
Review Next Steps

Discussion and Q&A



Today's Speakers

Claire Weston



Program
Director,
Center for
Creative Land
Recycling

Carrie Staton



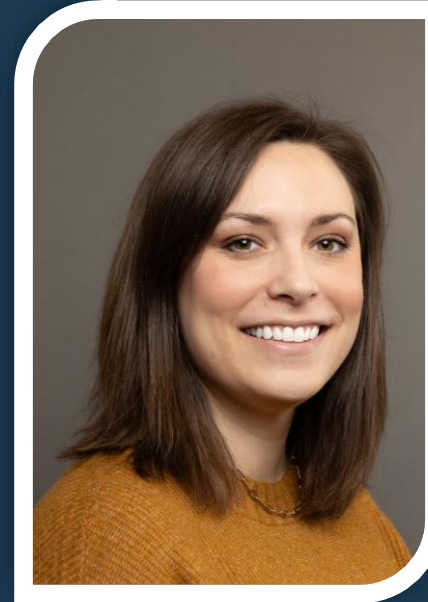
Director,
Mid-Atlantic
TAB

Tyieshia
James



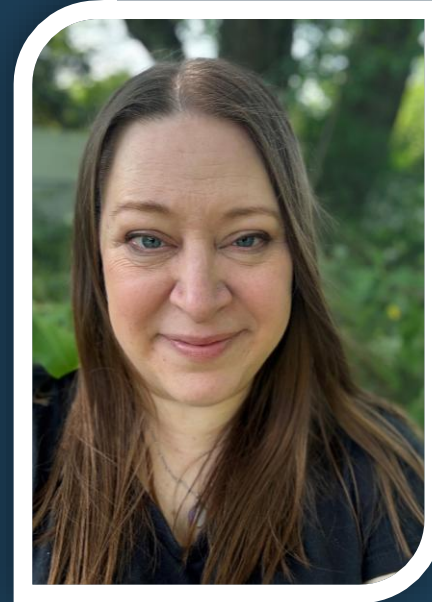
Director of
Special
Programs,
Center for
Nonprofit
Advancement

Abby
Wolensky



Director of the
Employment
Institute,
Auberle

Dawn Farver



Brownfields
Project Officer
USEPA Region

3



Overview of the Brownfields Job Training Grant Program

- Funding is for programs that “recruit, train, and place local, unemployed, and under-employed residents with the skills needed to secure full-time employment in the environmental field.”
- Jobs across a spectrum of brownfield-related activities, including the assessment, cleanup, remediation, and planning/site preparation for the revitalization of brownfields.



Photo courtesy of: Employment Skills Center, Carlisle, PA

Brownfields Job Training Grant Program

- History
 - 1995: USEPA Announces the first Brownfields Pilot grants
 - USEPA was focusing on/concerned about environmental equity
 - Brownfields activities in communities ≠ local community jobs
 - 1998: USEPA awards first Brownfields Job Training Pilot Grants
- Brownfields Job Training Grant Program Today
 - As of **June 2026**, USEPA has awarded **456 grants** totaling over **\$119 million** to support Brownfields Job Training Grant programs
 - More than **23,500** individuals have completed training and over **17,300** individuals have been placed in environmental careers
 - Average starting wages for these individuals is **~\$22 per hour**
 - Placement Rate: **~74%**

Job Training in Region 3

- There are 12 active Job Training Grants in Region 3
- Totaling over \$5.8 million in funding



FY27 Brownfields Job Training Grant Competition Information



- [FY27 Job Training Grant Competition](#)
 - Awards up to \$300,000
 - Project Period of Performance: up to 3 years
 - Years 1 & 2: Recruitment and Screening, Completion of Training
 - Year 3: Placement and Tracking of Graduates, Reporting to EPA
 - 17-20 JT Grant Awards anticipated nationwide
 - No Cost Share Requirement
- The [FY27 Job Training Grant Notice of Funding Opportunities](#) is posted and applications are currently being accepted

FY27 Job Training Grant Applications are due **Wednesday,
September 23, 2026**

Substantive Changes



The following are the substantive changes to the Fiscal Year 2027 Job Training Request for Applications:

1. Revisions to threshold language and general requirements.
2. General revisions to the review criteria to clarify existing language.

For a complete list of changes, please
review the
**“Fiscal Year 2027 Brownfields Job Training
Guidelines Summary of Changes”**
available at
[https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/fiscal-year-2027-
brownfields-job-training-grants](https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/fiscal-year-2027-brownfields-job-training-grants)

Grant Requirements



- You must be an [Eligible Entity](#) to receive a Job Training Grant
- Target unemployed and under-employed individuals that are residents living in or near an area adversely impacted by the presence of brownfield sites
- Must not duplicate other federally-funded environmental job training programs
- OSHA 40 HR Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) Training Required for **ALL PARTICIPANTS**
- Must meet threshold criteria as outlined in the Notice of Funding Opportunities
- Applicants who were awarded a FY26 BF Job Training Grant are **NOT ELIGIBLE** to apply under this competition



Photo courtesy of: Employment Skills Center, Carlisle, PA

Eligible Uses of Job Training Grant Funds



- **Personnel costs** for instructors to conduct training, fringe benefits, and/or tasks associated with programmatic reporting requirements
- Costs for **screening** and **placement** of students
- Costs associated with health exams, drug testing, and licensing fees
- Costs for **training materials** and **work gear** associated with the training curriculum
- **Outreach activities** directed toward engaging prospective employers to be involved in the job training program and to hire graduates
- **Participant support costs**

Eligible Courses for Job Training Grant Funds



- Site Safety Training
- Lead-Based Paint and Asbestos Inspection and Abatement
- First Aid & CPR
- Confined Space Entry
- Environmental Sampling
- Hazardous Waste Management
- Chemical Safety Awareness



Note: Training can be delivered at awareness, intermediate, or advanced levels. Expanded descriptions of these trainings are available in the [FY27 NOFO](#), the [FAQs](#), and the [List of Eligible and Ineligible Brownfield Job Training Courses](#) available on the [Brownfields Job Training page](#).

Ineligible Uses of Job Training Grant Funds



- Brownfields Job Training Grant Funds may NOT be used for:
 - Training in general construction skills and trades
 - Life skills or education activities such as resume writing, remedial math and reading classes, interview skills, etc.
 - EPA encourages applicants to leverage this training through partners and/or outside funding
 - Administrative or indirect costs in excess of 5% of total EPA funding

Note: Section 3.A.4. of the NOFO provides a more illustrative list of ineligible uses of grant funds

BFJT Overview



Regular vs. Coalition Application

Which is right for you?

Apply as a Regular Applicant if...

Your organization plans to carry out the training program on its own *with project partners*.

- One lead applicant
- Partners can be subrecipients, contractors, or leveraged
- Simpler application and grant administration
- Fewer threshold eligibility requirements



Remember: You can have many project partners without applying as a coalition. Most successful applications involve strong partnerships but are submitted by a single applicant.

Apply as a Coalition Applicant if...

Two or more organizations want to jointly apply and share responsibility of the grant.

- Multiple **coalition members** work together under one application
- Best when organizations are implementing the program across multiple jurisdictions/service areas
- Requires additional coalition documentation

Remember: There is *no competitive advantage* to applying as a coalition. Coalition applications have additional threshold requirements for non-lead coalition applicants.



BFJT Overview | Meeting Threshold



Threshold Eligibility Criteria

1. Applicant Eligibility
 - Demonstrate how your organization is eligible
 - Indicate if you are exempt from federal taxation under 501(c)(4) of the IRC
2. Coalition Agreement (**only applicable to coalition applicants**)
 - Signed letter from each non-lead coalition member in which they agree to be part of the coalition.
3. Target Area
4. **Required HAZWOPER 40 Training**
5. Demonstration that Proposed Project **Does Not Duplicate** Other Federally Funded Environmental Job Training Programs

IMPORTANT: If one of the threshold criteria doesn't apply to you do not skip it. **Affirm that it does not apply to you.**



Brownfields Job Training Support

The U.S. EPA Brownfields and Land Revitalization Program can provide coordinated technical assistance to help plan, prepare, and strengthen local Brownfields Job Training (BFJT) programs. The three complementary support channels described below can help guide an organization from pre-application through program design and capacity building. For more information on the U.S. EPA Brownfields and Land Revitalization Program, visit: www.epa.gov/brownfields

EPA Regional Coordinators

Explain rules, requirements, compliance, and official guidance, including:

- Confirm eligibility or application requirements.
- Clarify grant conditions, deadlines, threshold items, or allowable costs.
- Address reporting and compliance issues.
- Understand regional funding priorities or opportunities.



Regional Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) Providers

Share perspectives on brownfields, job training connections and application support, including:

- Guidance on navigating the application process.
- Review of draft applications.
- Review training course descriptions.
- General questions about brownfields in your region.
- Connections to regional resources or partners.



BFJT Technical Assistance

Build capacity for program design, implementation and best practices, including:

- Curriculum planning.
- Employer engagement and partnership development.
- Tracking outcomes, data collection, and performance metrics.
- Program Sustainability planning.
- Access to tools, templates.
- Individualized 1-on-1 consultations for tailored support.

Note: Assistance related to implementation support is not available to applying entities during an open Notice of Funding Opportunity.



TETRA TECH



EPA Brownfields Job Training Resources



- [FY27 Notice of Funding Opportunities Website](#)
- [FY 2027 Brownfields Job Training Grant Guidelines](#)
- [Getting Started for Applicants](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions about Brownfields Job Training Grants](#)
- [Technical Assistance Resources for Job Training Grantees/Applicants](#)
- [2026 EPA Brownfields Job Training All Grantee Meeting:](#)
 - Open to current grantees and interested grantees
 - October 7-8, 2026; New Orleans, LA
- [Professional Learning Community Calls:](#)
 - Hosted by Technical Assistance Provider (Tetra Tech/Adaapta)
 - Submit [INQUIRY FORM](#) asking to be added to PLC Call Invites
 - View [Professional Learning Community Meetings](#)
 - View past [Job Training Webinars](#)

Drafting Your Grant App | Demonstrating Need

Ask yourself two questions:
Why are you doing this and **who** are you doing this for?

Why

- Identify and describe the need using data
 - Why is this training important for your community?
 - What environmental challenges does your community face?
- Share findings from your **labor market study** and how those findings have informed your curriculum development

Who

- Identify and describe your target area using demographic data
- Who specifically are you targeting? (unemployed individuals, formerly incarcerated persons, veterans, etc.)



Your labor market study is critical.

Learn more about how to conduct one and how to use it to support your application by watching

[Strategies for Successful Brownfields Job Training Programs](#)



Drafting Your Grant App | Demonstrating Need

Use data to identify and demonstrate need

Data Type	National Sources	Regional/Local Sources (Examples)
Demographic Data to Demonstrate Community Need	• U.S. Census Bureau (Detailed demographic, income, and poverty data) • City Health Dashboard	• Delaware Open Data • PA State Data Center • Penn State County Population & Demographic Change Reports
Data on Overburdened and Sensitive Populations	• CDC Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) • National Equity Atlas • County Health Rankings and Roadmaps	• Rural Health Information Hub • Virginia Department of Health Data Portal • WV GIS Technical Center Data Clearinghouse



Drafting Your Grant App | Demonstrating Need

Use data to identify and demonstrate need

Data Type	National Sources	Regional/Local Sources (Examples)
Labor Market Data	• Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) • Results from your labor market study: surveys, reports, interviews with employers, etc.	• United for ALICE: The State of Delaware Economic & Labor Data • Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service Research Reports & Data Dashboards
Environmental Challenges and Other Vulnerabilities	• EPA's Cleanups In My Community (CIMC) • U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit • FEMA National Risk Index	• University of Delaware Center for Drug & Health Studies Data Resources • FEMA Resilience Analysis Planning Tool (RAPT) • Multi-Regional 2024 Baseline Rural Development Surveys



Drafting Your Grant App | Training Description

Provide a detailed description of curriculum and certifications earned

“Describe how the training is structured to meeting the needs of the students, employers and the community.”

**Don't forget
these 3
columns!!**

Course Name / Level of Training	Type of Certification	Course Description	# of Hours	Start Date – End Date	# of Times Course will be Offered	Cost of Course Per Cohort	Total Course Cost	% of Grant Budget
RCRA Hazardous Waste Management / Intermediate	Federal	This course provides an overview of RCRA hazardous waste management regulations. It covers key topics such as waste identification, generator classifications, storage requirements, and cradle-to-grave tracking. Participants will gain a foundational understanding o how to manage hazardous waste in compliance with federal law.	16	Week 1	5	\$2,268	\$11,340	6%
Blueprint Reading / Intermediate	Industry	This course introduces the fundamentals of blueprint reading, with a focus on interpreting site plans, environmental reports, and construction drawings. Participants learn how to read and.....	8	Week 6	5	\$1,134	\$5,670	3%



Drafting Your Grant App | Program Structure

Program Structure



Recruitment, screening, and retention of students

How will your organization ensure prospective students of the program are successful?



Program support for job placement

How will your organization assist graduates with initial job placement?



Program sustainability

How will your organization ensure that the job training program will continue once grant funds are exhausted?

- EPA tracks outputs and outcomes based on:
 - How many participants you **enroll**
 - Number of students **graduated**
 - Placement of students in **employment** or number of students pursuing **further education**
 - **Average wages** for students placed in employment
- Applicants should discuss how program outcomes reflect challenges presented in describing **Community Need**

The clarity of your **cohort structure** is important!



Drafting Your Grant App | Cultivating Partnerships

Who's at the table:

Employers: Local businesses, environmental contractors, labor unions

Environmental Entities: MARC recipients in your community, City or County Depts.

Job Readiness/Life Skills: GED prep institutions, substance abuse counseling, One Stop Centers, Workforce Development Boards

Community: Community leaders, faith-based organizations, block clubs, social service providers

Important: Include a letter from each identified partner stating their commitments to the program.

Letters should be tailored and specific!

Coalition Member (optional): If more than one job training entities want to apply together



Drafting Your Grant App | Cultivating Partnerships

Cultivating and maintaining partnerships with employers is crucial to success

Engage employers early to:

- Understand labor market demand
- Shape curriculum
- Outline their involvement/commitments (Exp. employer guest speaker series, field trips, mentoring, interview commitments, etc.)

Engagement Strategies:

- Conduct focus groups and employer interviews
- Survey employers and consider offering incentives for survey participation
- Host employer led workshops and site visits



Drafting Your Grant App | Budget Development

Budget Development Tips

- Set aside funding to support placement and tracking of graduates
- Use the provided budget template and modify as necessary
- Must include a budget narrative that provides basis for each cost estimate **(show the calculations!)**
 - Exp. “Student safety equipment for 100 students at a cost of \$50 each for a total of \$5,000”
- Familiarize yourself with [participant support cost guidance](#)
 - Participant support costs must not exceed 40% of the award
- **Take note:** Administrative costs are restricted to 5% of the total award and all indirect costs are considered administrative and are therefore subject to the 5% administrative cap.

Sample Budget Table

	Budget Category	Project Tasks				Total
		Outreach, Recruitment, and Retention	Instruction/ Training	Program Management	Placement and Tracking	
Direct Costs	Personnel					
	Fringe benefits					
	Travel ¹					
	Contractual					
	Supplies					
	Other (Please be specific for Participant Support Costs such as stipends)					
Total Direct Costs ²						
Indirect Costs ²						
Total Budget (Total Direct Costs+ Indirect Costs)						

Tips!

Review accepted BFJT grant examples and look at how they structure and format their budgets

Allocating budget towards actual training is viewed more favorably

¹ Travel to brownfields-related training conferences is an acceptable use of these grant funds.

² Administrative costs (direct and/or indirect) for the Brownfields Job Training Grant applicant itself cannot exceed 5% of the total EPA-requested funds.



Drafting Your Grant App | Budget Development

Budget Category	Project Tasks				Total
	Outreach, Recruitment, and Retention	Instruction/ Training	Program Management	Placement and Tracking	
Personnel	\$6,000	\$21,000	\$24,000	\$12,000	\$63,000
Fringe Benefits	\$1,680	\$5,880	\$360		\$17,640
Travel	\$1,200	\$1,800	\$200		\$8,400
Contractual	\$0	\$108,000	\$0		\$108,000
Supplies	\$600	\$13,560	\$600		\$15,960
Other	\$3,000	\$60,000	\$6,000	\$3,000	\$72,000
Total Direct	\$12,480	\$210,240	\$42,120	\$20,160	\$285,000
Indirect Costs	\$657	\$11,065	\$2,217	\$1,061	\$15,000
Total Budget	\$13,137	\$221,305	\$44,337	\$21,221	\$300,000

Of this \$60,000, \$25,000 are participant support costs



Is the Instruction and Training task category total greater than 60% of the budget total?

YES! → $\$221,305 / \$300,000 = 74\%$



Is the Participant Support Costs total less than 40% of the budget total?

YES! → $25,000 / \$300,000 = 8.3\%$



Is the Instruction and Training task category total minus the Participant Support Costs total greater than 60% of the budget total?

YES! → $(\$221,305 - \$25,000) / \$300,000 = 65\%$



Drafting Your Grant App | Budget Development

Budget Narrative – Deficient Level of Detail vs. Sufficient Level of Detail

Supplies to deliver the training and provide personal protection equipment will cost \$52,000 over the grant period.

Student Stipends will cost \$48,000 over the grant period.

Drug Screening will cost \$5,280 over the course of the grant period.

Marketing for program student recruitment will cost a total of \$18,000 for the entire grant period.

Supplies to deliver the training and provide personal protection equipment (**Safety glasses, gloves, hard hats, earplugs, respirators, and steel-toed boots in compliance with OSHA safety standards**) and equipment (**air quality monitors, noise level meters, chemical detection kits, water testing kits, fire extinguishers, first aid kits, spill containment supplies, and eye wash stations**) to every student (totals \$52,000, **which equates to \$541.67 per student, per session**).

Student Stipends of **\$500 per enrolled student (96)** totaling \$48,000 over the grant period.

Drug Screening will cost **\$55 per student**, totaling \$5,280 over the course of the grant period.

Marketing for program student recruitment will focus on **targeted social media advertisements** and **will cost \$1,500 per session, per year** and total \$18,000 for the entire grant period.



Drafting Your Grant App | Budget Development

Budget Narrative – Deficient Level of Detail vs. Sufficient Level of Detail

Detail added on types of supplies and PPE that factor into the cost

Supplies to deliver the training and provide personal protection equipment (**Safety glasses, gloves, hard hats, earplugs, respirators, and steel-toed boots in compliance with OSHA safety standards**) and equipment (**air quality monitors, noise level meters, chemical detection kits, water testing kits, fire extinguishers, first aid kits, spill containment supplies, and eye wash stations**) to every student (totals \$52,000, **which equates to \$541.67 per student, per session**).

Detail added on the cost per student effectively writing out the math → $\$500 \times 96 = \$48,000$

Student Stipends of **\$500 per enrolled student (96)** totaling \$48,000 over the grant period.

Drug Screening will cost **\$55 per student**, totaling \$5,280 over the course of the grant period.

Detail added on the cost per session → $\$1,500 \times 12 \text{ session} = \$18,000$

Marketing for program student recruitment will focus on **targeted social media advertisements** and **will cost \$1,500 per session, per year** and total \$18,000 for the entire grant period.



Drafting Your Grant App | “Table Manners”

Important tables and charts

NARRATIVE

- Demographic Information
- Training Program Table
- Budget
- Outputs
- Partnerships
- Leveraged Funding

NARRATIVE ATTACHMENT

- Milestone Schedule

“Eye candy”



Tip 1!

Follow EPA suggested format
as closely as possible

No Pictures



Tip 2!

Tables and charts give visual relief,
and provide a lot of info in a snapshot -
to an otherwise prose-heavy document



Common Challenges and Pain Points

Common Mistakes

Meeting Threshold

- Applicants do not meet all threshold criteria
- Applicants don't submit threshold responses

Labor Market Study

- Applicants don't provide enough data and/or only use online data and don't conduct employer surveys
- Applicants don't detail their methods or results used to conduct the LMA

Employer Engagement

- Applicants don't connect with employers early enough
- Partnership letters lack detail

Budget Development

- Miscalculations can lead to budgets that are less competitive than they could be.
- Budget narrative lacks sufficient detail.

Tips for Success

- Thoroughly read the NOFO
- Respond to threshold criteria questions even if not applicable

- Utilize data sources beyond baseline employment data
- Clearly outline your methods for assessing labor market demand

- Engage employer partners early
- Ensure letters include specific commitments from partners

- Triple check calculations. Do not include PSCs in Training task category total.
- Write out calculations in narrative



Let's Hear from Our Grantee Speakers!

Why did you elect to apply for the BFJT grant?

What was the need in your community and how did you demonstrate that need? Who are you targeting?

What has your success been - Placement rate, types of jobs, etc.

What does your curriculum look like?

How did you cultivate productive partnerships with relevant entities (environmental, community, employers)?

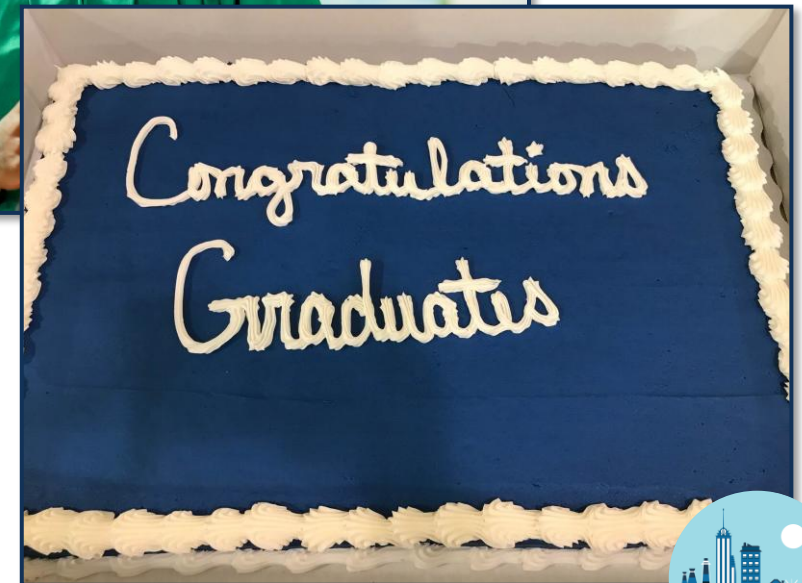
What challenges or pain points did you encounter and how did you overcome them?



Your Next Steps | Get your ducks in a row

Do these things ASAP!

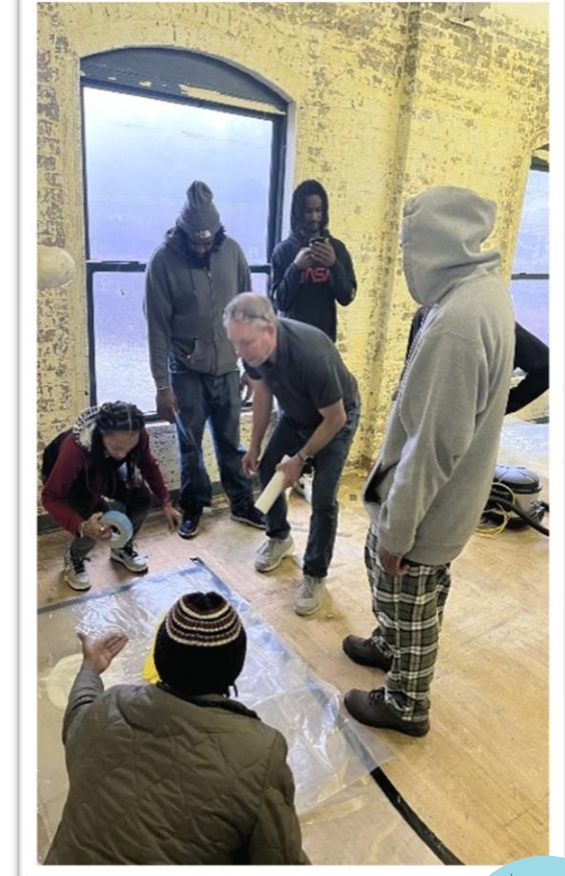
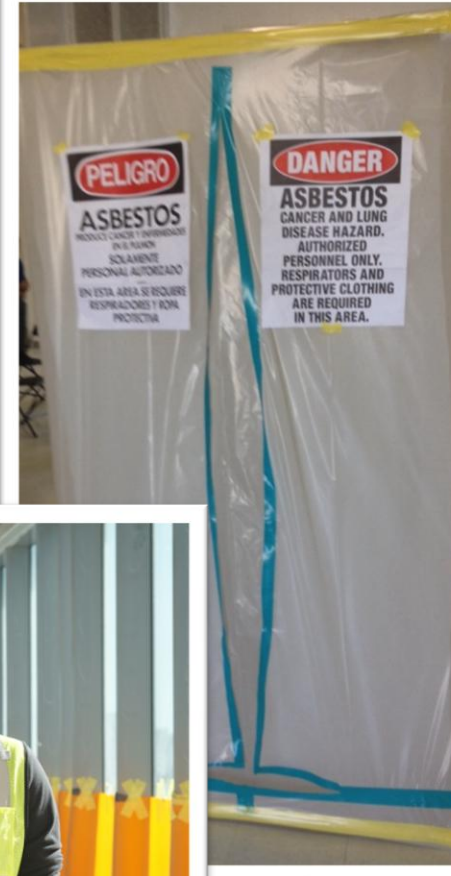
1. Register in SAM.gov
2. Make sure you're clear on **why** you're doing this and **who** you're doing this for
3. Review your Labor Market Study, leverage a partner's study on labor market data, and begin collecting any remaining data that will allow you to identify and demonstrate need in your application
4. Solidify partnerships and confirm how each partner will be involved



Your Next Steps | Draft and Develop Application

Do these things in the first month

1. Open a public comment period/notify the public that you'll be applying for this grant
2. Solicit letters of commitment from partners
3. Develop curriculum - any uncertainty regarding course eligibility should be discussed with CCLR
4. Draft application
5. [Schedule a consultation with TAB](#)



Your Next Steps | Review and Refine

Do these things in the second month

- Finish drafting your application
- Get your application reviewed by Mid-Atlantic TAB!

Drafts received by September 11 are guaranteed a review.

Ready for Review?!

Email the following to wwutab@mail.wvu.edu

1. Application Information Sheet
2. Threshold Criteria Response
3. Narrative Criteria Response (doc/docx format)
4. Letters of Commitment from Partners



Final Thoughts | Common Questions/Concerns

- ☐ **You do not need to identify specific brownfield sites as part of your project**, nor are participants required to work on brownfield sites after completing the program.
- ☐ **Training programs must address unemployed or underemployed residents in the target area** (must be 18 at the time of graduation).
- ☐ Additional training (e.g., life skills, job readiness, construction, carpentry, etc.) may be included in your overall program, but they **must be funded through non-EPA sources**.
- ☐ **There is no cost share requirement**. However, applicants should demonstrate strong partnerships and explain how those partnerships will be leveraged to support the program.
- ☐ **At least 60% of the grant should support direct instruction and training activities** (excluding participant support costs like paid on-the-job training). Participant support costs cannot exceed 40% and do not count toward the recommended 60% minimum training budget.

Clarity and Responsiveness are key!

Write for reviewers who know nothing about your organization or community. **Applications should be clear, complete, and avoid assuming prior knowledge.**



What questions do you have for us?





AUGUST
13

Cleanup Costs: Making the
Remediation Dollars Make Sense

AUGUST
20

Delaware Brownfield Conference
Wilmington, DE

AUGUST
27

Perfecting the 3 P's: Planning, Preparing,
and Positioning for Federal Grants

SEPTEMBER
8-10

WV Brownfields & Main Street Conference
Huntington, WV

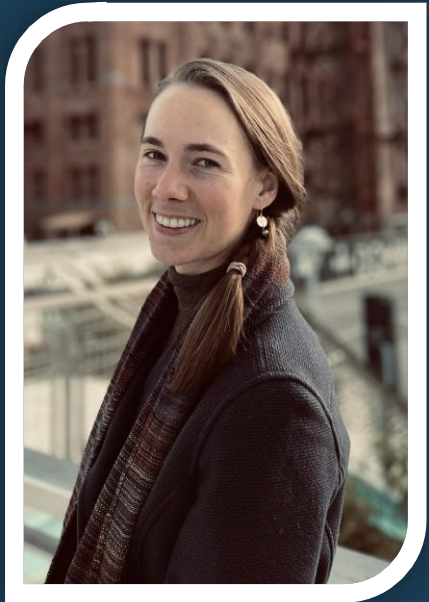
OCTOBER
7-8

Brownfields Job Training All-Grantee
Meeting
New Orleans, LA

Upcoming Events

Contact Today's Speakers

Claire Weston



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Center for Creative
Land Recycling

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Carrie Staton



Director,
Mid-Atlantic TAB

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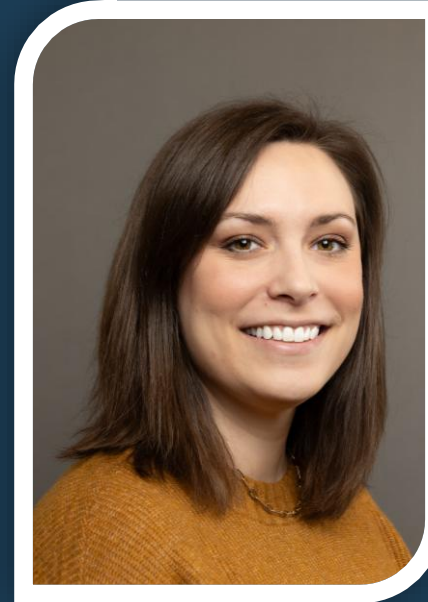
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James



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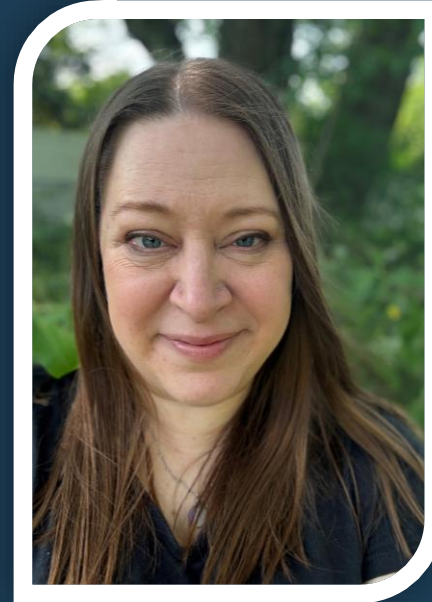
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Thank You!



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