

December 18, 2025



ASK THE EXPERTS

Tips & Tricks for EPA Brownfield Grant Successes

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INTRODUCTIONS

Mid-Atlantic TAB



Haley Paul,
Outreach and Education Associate



Jared Stewart,
Community Development Associate

MID-ATLANTIC TAB

What do we do?

- Mid-Atlantic TAB is the Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) provider for EPA Region 3.
- Resources we offer include Brownfield Education
 - This includes today's EPA Grant webinar!



INTRODUCTIONS

EPA and PA DEP



Christian Smith,
EPA R3 Brownfields Section



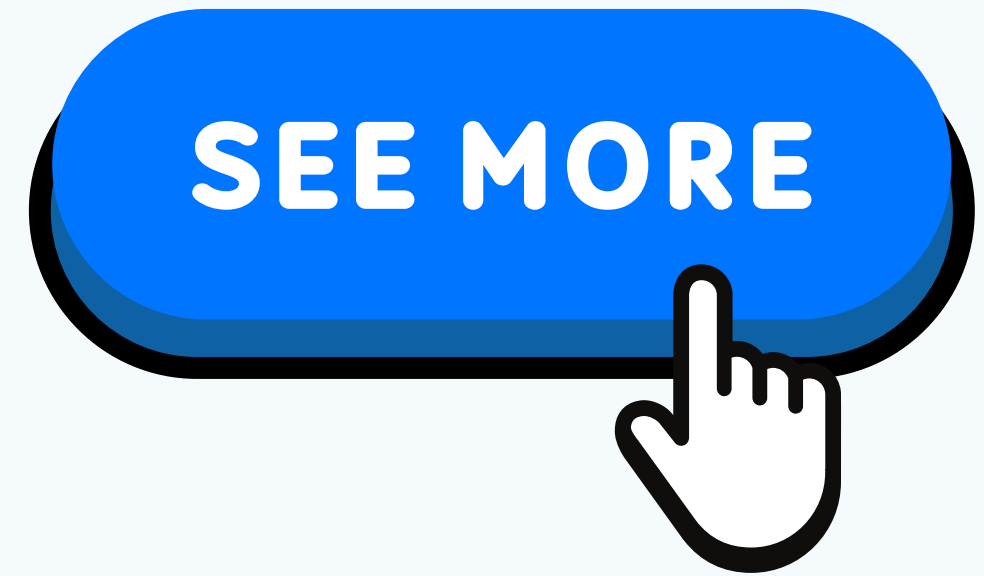
John Gross,
Environmental Group Manager

EPA BROWNFIELD GRANT FY26 WEBINAR - PART 1

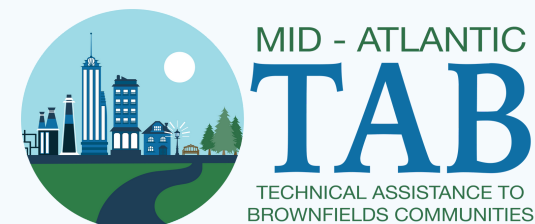
State EPA Grant Webinar = Part 2



**DESTINATION GRANT AWARD:
HOW TO FUND YOUR
BROWNFIELD PROJECT**



Check out [Part 1 here](#) for more details about each brownfield grant application, including threshold, narrative, meeting requirements, and eligible activities



AGENDA

-  Overview of EPA Brownfields Grants and Eligibility
-  SAM.GOV and Application Threshold Criteria
-  FY26 MAC Grant Changes
-  Grant Package
-  Key Information
-  TAB Resources and any Questions

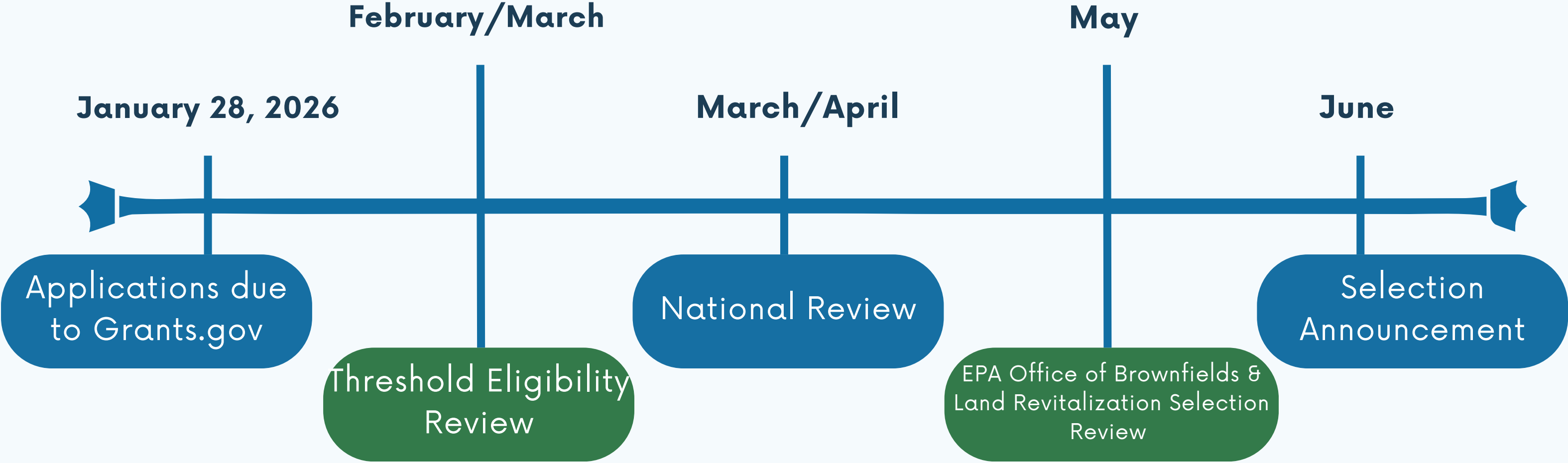
EPA GRANT OVERVIEW

FY 26

- Also referred to as MARC Grants
 - **M**ulti-Purpose
 - **A**ssessment
 - ~~**R**evolving Loan Funds~~ (Not included this round)
 - **C**leanup



EPA GRANT TIMELINE





ELIGIBILITY - ALL GRANTS

- ✓ State, local, and tribal governments
- ✓ General purpose units of local government
- ✓ Regional council or redevelopment agency sanctioned by a state
- ✓ Non-profit organizations*
- ✓ Quasi-governmental agencies

*501c4 organizations that lobby the federal government are not eligible for EPA Brownfield Grants

Source: See [EPA Eligible Entities](#) for more details

Anticipated Funding for FY26

Grant Type	Maximum Project Period	Maximum Amount per Grant	Estimated Awards	Total Per Grant Type - Infrastructure Investment and Jobs	Total Per Grant Type - Regular Appropriated Funds
Multipurpose	5 years	\$1,000,000	20	\$20,000,000	
Community-wide Assessment	4 years	\$500,000	70	\$35,000,000	
Assessment Coalitions	4 years	\$1,500,000	39		\$58,700,000
Community-wide Assessment Grants for State and Tribes	5 years	\$2,000,000	18	\$35,000,000	
Cleanup	4 years	\$500,000	10	\$5,000,000	
Cleanup	4 years	\$4,000,000	26	\$102,000,000	



FY26 Eligibility Chart for Multiple Applications



		In FY26, can I also apply for...?					
I am applying for		Multipurpose Grant	Community-Wide Assessment Grants for States and Tribes	Community-Wide Assessment Grant	Assessment Coalition Grant (Lead)	Non-Lead Member of an Assessment Coalition	Cleanup Grant
Multipurpose Grant		N/A	No	No	No	No	No
Community-Wide Assessment Grants for States and Tribes		No	N/A	No	No	No	Yes
Community-Wide Assessment Grant		No	No	N/A	No	No	Yes
Assessment Coalition Grant (Lead)		No	No	No	N/A	No	Yes
Non-Lead Member of an Assessment Coalition		No	No	No	No	N/A	No
Cleanup Grant		No	Yes (Choose One Type)			No	N/A

Note: To read this chart, identify the relevant grant type from the far-left column. Read across the row for eligibility information on the other grant types. For example, I am applying for a *Community-wide Assessment Grant*. In FY26, can I also apply for a *Cleanup Grant*? The green box indicates yes.

FY26 Eligibility Chart
for Multiple Applications



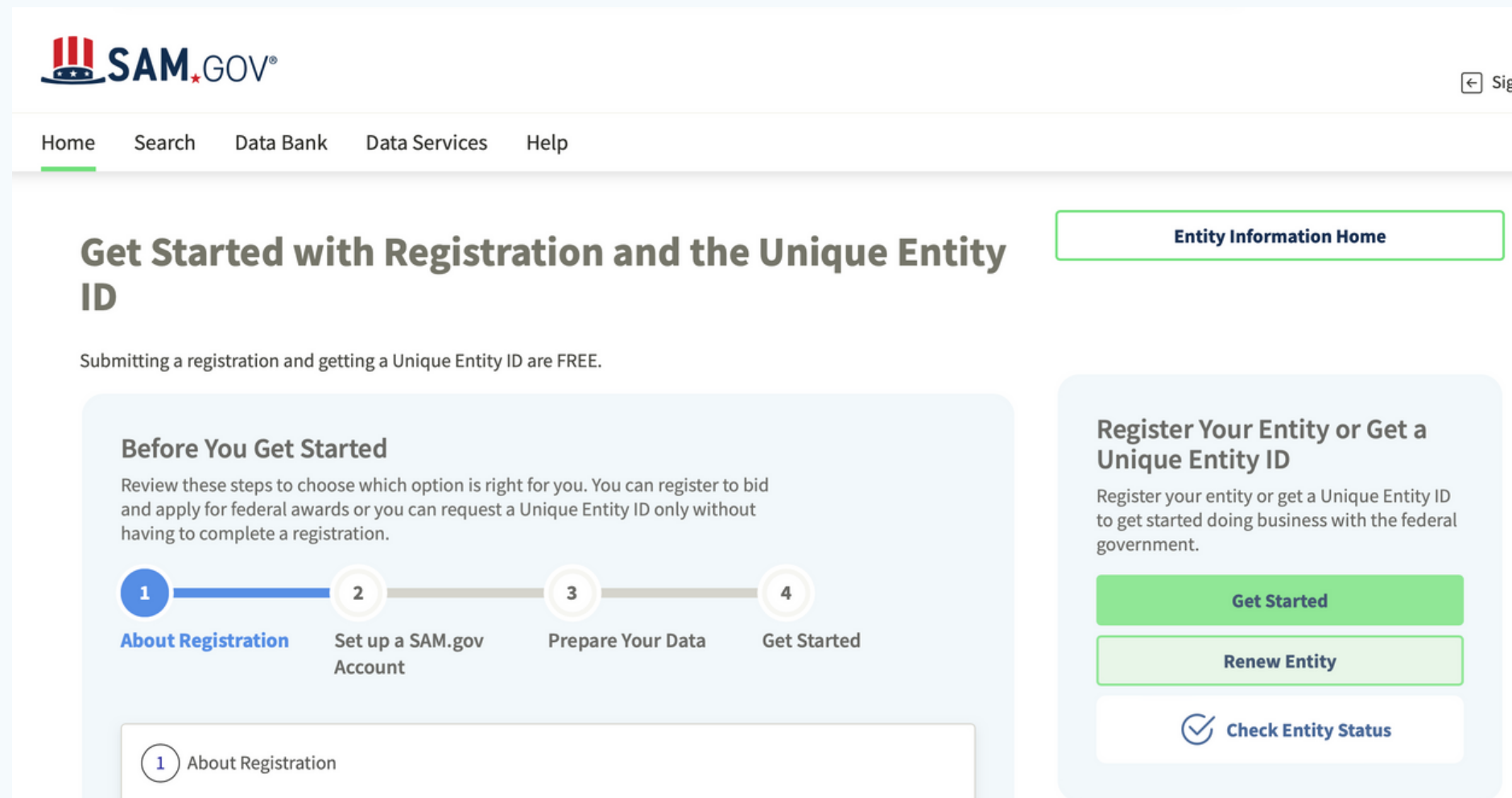
FY26 Eligibility Chart for Existing Grant Recipients

		In FY26, can I also apply for...?					
My organization currently has		Multipurpose Grant	Community-Wide Assessment Grants for States and Tribes	Community-Wide Assessment Grant	Assessment Coalition Grant (Lead)	Non-Lead Member of an Assessment Coalition	Cleanup Grant
Multipurpose Grant	Must draw down 70% of each MP Grant	Yes	Must draw down 70% of each MP Grant	Must draw down 70% of each MP Grant	Must draw down 70% of each MP Grant	Must draw down 70% of each Assessment Grant	Must draw down 70% of each MP Grant
Community-Wide Assessment Grants for States and Tribes	Not eligible	Must draw down 60% of each CWAGST Grant	Not eligible	Not eligible	Not eligible	Not eligible	Yes
Community-Wide Assessment Grant	Must draw down 70% of each Assessment Grant	Yes	Must draw down 70% of each Assessment Grant	Must draw down 70% of each Assessment Grant	Must draw down 70% of each Assessment Grant	Must draw down 70% of each Assessment Grant	Yes
Assessment Coalition Grant (Lead)	Must draw down 70% of each Assessment Grant	Yes	Must draw down 70% of each Assessment Grant	Must draw down 70% of each Assessment Grant	Must draw down 70% of each Assessment Grant	Must draw down 70% of each Assessment Grant	Yes
Non-Lead Member of an Assessment Coalition	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
RLF Grant	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Non-Lead Member of an RLF Coalition	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cleanup Grant	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, for a site that has not previously received Cleanup Grant funding

Note: Applicants must also meet all threshold criteria outlined in Section 2. of the guidelines. If you plan to apply for more than one grant type, please refer to the FY26 MARC Grant Eligibility Chart for Multiple Applications to determine which grants are available to you.

SAM.GOV

SAM.gov



- The System for Award Management (SAM) is an official website of the U.S. Government. There is NO cost to use SAM. You can use this site for free to:
 - Register to do business with the U.S. Government.
 - Update or renew your entity registration
 - Check the status of an entity registration
 - Search for entity registration and exclusion records
 - Can take at least 2 weeks or more to complete- **Don't Wait!**

SAM.gov

- The NOFO will be released through www.grants.gov
- All entities are required to have an active Sam.gov registration
- Applicants should ensure they have an active Unique Entity ID (UEI) now. EPA may not be flexible in allowing applicants to submit applications outside of www.grants.gov.





- To Register/Check Status/Renew: www.sam.gov

You will need:

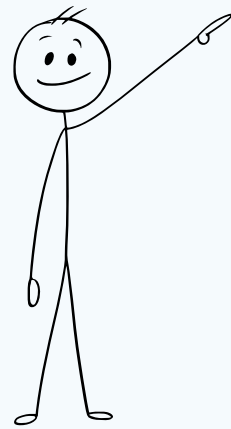
- ✓ Unique Entity ID
- ✓ Tax ID #
- ✓ Bank routing number, bank account number, and account type (i.e. checking/savings) to set up Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)



- Must be renewed every 12 months.
- Must be active when applying for grants.
- Make sure contact information is correct and up to date.
- FREE to register and renew- Watch Out for Scams!

PROCUREMENT **WARNING**

A qualified environmental professional (QEP) cannot prepare grant application AND be awarded contract to implement grant (Multipurpose, Assessment, RLF, Cleanup) **without going through competitive bid process**



This prevents QEP from unfair competitive advantage



THRESHOLD CRITERIA HIGHLIGHTS



THRESHOLD CRITERIA

ALL Grants

- Threshold eligibility criteria ensure applicants are eligible to receive an EPA Brownfield MARC grant
- Criteria are pass/fail and based on certain requests for information identified in the following slides
- Information submitted is used by EPA only to make eligibility determinations for EPA Brownfield grants
- Only applications that pass **all threshold criteria** will be evaluated against evaluation criteria in Section 5.A. - Evaluation Criteria - of Grant Solicitations
- **Double check your work!!** You cannot make changes to your application past the submission deadline and EPA cannot accept additional documents past the deadline.

Responses to each criterion are required and must be included as an attachment to the grant Narrative which is included in application submitted to EPA.

Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.



THRESHOLD CRITERIA

ALL Grants

Assessment/Multipurpose Grant

- Current letter from environmental state agency acknowledging that applicant plans to conduct activities and apply for FY26 brownfield grant
- Letter from previous year(s) not permitted

Cleanup Grant

- Current letter from environmental state agency acknowledging that applicant plans to conduct cleanup activities and apply for FY26 brownfield grant
- Site Characterization:
 - Determination must be made by the state environmental agency that either:
 - A sufficient level of characterization has been performed OR
 - Additional assessment is needed
 - If additional assessment is needed, a statement from the applicant confirming that sufficient characterization will be completed by June 15, 2026 must be included
- Phase II ESA completed (or equivalent)



THRESHOLD CRITERIA

Cleanup Grants Ownership Eligibility

- MUST be sole owner of the site at the time of application submission.
 - Fee simple title through a legal document.
 - The owner must have conducted all appropriate inquiries (AAI) prior to acquiring the property.
- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment not more than 180 days before the property transfer.
 - **The owner must not be liable in any way for the contamination at the site or affiliated with any other person potentially liable for the contamination.**



THRESHOLD CRITERIA

Cleanup Grants

COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION AND PUBLIC MEETING

PUBLIC MEETING

- Discuss the draft application
 - Consider public comments
 - Can be a regularly scheduled community meeting with other topics
 - In-person and/or virtual
- Required attachments for grant application:
 - Copy of newspaper/online advertisement of meeting
 - Comments or a summary of the public comments received
 - Response to public comments
 - Meeting notes or summary of public meeting(s)
 - Sign-in sheets or participant list



THRESHOLD CRITERIA

Cleanup Grants

COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION AND PUBLIC MEETING

COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION

- Ad in local newspaper or an equivalent means to communicate with target community.
 - **No later than two weeks before the application is submitted (January 14, 2026)**
- Must clearly state:
 - A copy of this grant application, including draft ABCA(s), is available for public review and comment
 - How to comment on the draft application
 - Where the draft is located (i.e. town hall, library, website)
 - Date, time, and location of public meeting(s)



THRESHOLD CRITERIA - INFOGRAPHIC

Cleanup Grant

Section A: Property Ownership Eligibility- Hazardous Substances

Liable parties may include all current and former owners and operators, and those who arranged for or contributed to the disposal and/or treatment of hazardous substances on the site. To be eligible for EPA grant funding, you must demonstrate that you:

1. Are exempt from CERCLA liability; or
2. The property is publicly owned and was acquired prior to January 11, 2002; or
3. Meet requirements for an affirmative defense to CERCLA liability

1. Exemptions to CERCLA Liability

- Indian Tribes
- Alaska Native Village Corporations and Alaska Native Regional Corporation
- Property acquired under certain circumstances by units of state and local government:
- Seizure or in connection with a law enforcement activity
- Bankruptcy
- Tax delinquency
- Abandonment
- Escheat or certain inter-governmental transfers
- See [FY2025 FAQs](#) for further information

The **Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA)**

imposes liability on parties responsible for, in whole or in part, the presence of hazardous substances at a site.

Info Needed!

To demonstrate (1) **the State or local government is exempt** OR To demonstrate (2) you qualify for the **Publicly-Owned Brownfields Sites exception** the following information is required:

- Conditions under which the property was acquired
- Date the property was acquired
- Whether all hazardous substance disposal occurred before your ownership
- Confirmation that you have not caused or contributed to the release of hazardous substances
- Confirmation that you have not arranged for the disposal of or transported hazardous substances to the property

2. Exceptions To Meeting the Requirements For Asserting an Affirmative Defense To CERCLA Liability

- **Publicly owned** brownfield sites acquired prior to January 11, 2002

Full handout available on
our [website!](#)



THRESHOLD CRITERIA - INFOGRAPHIC

Assessment Grant

INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR ALL ASSESSMENT GRANTS

This covers the threshold eligibility criteria that ensure applicants can receive a grant. Threshold criteria are pass/fail and are based on the information below. Once you pass all threshold criteria, your application is evaluated further.

Applicant Eligibility

Indicate your applicant type and provide information that shows you are eligible for an Assessment Grant. Indicate if your organization is exempt from federal taxation.

Community Involvement

Provide information on how you plan to inform and involve the community in the assessment of your brownfield.

Contractors and Named Subrecipients

If you have selected a contractor, you must demonstrate that you did so according to EPA requirements. If you have identified a specific subrecipient, you must comply with EPA's subrecipient requirements even if they are referred to as a "partner" in your application.

Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

If you have a pre-existing EPA Brownfields Grant, you must demonstrate that you have disbursed these funds.

Full handout available on
our [website](#)!



FY26 MAC* GRANT CHANGES

*Note that RLF Grants are not included in FY26 solicitations



EPA BROWNFIELD MAC GRANT

Changes for FY26

Complete list of changes to all grant guidelines for FY26 can be found [here](#)



ALL GRANTS



ALL GRANTS

NEW CHANGES

- ➔ EPA now uses streamlined NOFO (notice of funding opportunities) template, in line with 2024 Uniform Grants Guidance updates.
 - Information rearranged into different sections
 - Review FY26 guidelines for details
- ➔ Review updated language and requirements to align with priorities; Ex: Justice40 initiatives removed

- ➔ [All grants but cleanup] Section 2.A: Clarification on how nonprofit organization exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(4) may be eligible to apply

Sample Format for Budget Table provided in the guidelines.



Not a complete list of guideline changes. See [link](#) for complete list.

ASSESSMENT GRANTS



NEW CHANGES



Community-Wide Assessment Grants

Entities with an open Community-Wide Assessment Grant for States and Tribes (CWAGST) award must meet the 60.00% drawdown requirement for each CWAGST grant to apply for CWAGST funding under this solicitation.

Current Assessment & Multipurpose Grant recipients that want to apply for Community-Wide Assessment Grant funding must have met 70.00% drawdown requirement by [October 1, 2025](#) to apply for FY26 Community-Wide Assessment Grant.

Point/Percentage Distribution

- Project Area Description and Plan for Revitalization – 26%
- Community Need and Community Engagement – 23%
- Task Description, Cost Estimates, and Measuring Success – 29%
- Programmatic Capability – 22%

Maximum number of points: 155 (reduced from 160)

Not a complete list of guideline changes. See [link](#) for complete list.



NEW CHANGES



Assessment Coalition Grants

Awards available up to \$1,500,000

Entities with open award (or pending an award for) Community-wide Assessment Grant for States and Tribes are not eligible to apply for Assessment Grant funding under this solicitation.

Previous limitations on entities eligible to lead Assessment Coalition Grant removed. List of entities eligible to apply for FY26 Assessment Coalition Grant is same for both lead and non-lead coalition members.

Current Assessment & Multipurpose Grant recipients that want to apply for funding must have met 70.00% drawdown requirement by October 1, 2025 to apply for FY26 Community-wide Assessment Grant.

Coalition target areas may not overlap, and the target areas must be in at least three (3) distinct municipalities or jurisdictions (e.g., town, city, or Tribe).

Point/Percentage Distribution

- Project Area Description and Plan for Revitalization – 28%
- Community Need and Community Engagement – 22%
- Task Description, Cost Estimates, and Measuring Success – 28%
- Programmatic Capability – 22%

Maximum number of points: 160 (reduced from 165)

MULTIPURPOSE GRANT



NEW CHANGES

Multipurpose Grants

Entities with an open award (or pending an award for) Community-wide Assessment Grant for States and Tribes are not eligible to apply for Multipurpose Grant funding under this solicitation.

Current Assessment & Multipurpose Grant recipients that want to apply for funding must have met 70.00% drawdown requirement by October 1, 2025 to apply for FY26 Community-wide Assessment Grant.

Point/Percentage Distribution

- Project Area Description and Plan for Revitalization – 27.5%
- Community Need and Community Engagement – 24%
- Task Description, Cost Estimates, and Measuring Success – 27.5%
- Programmatic Capability – 21%

Maximum number of points: 165 (Reduced from 170)



Not a complete list of guideline changes. See [link](#) for complete list.

CLEANUP GRANTS



NEW CHANGES

Cleanup Grants

Applicant site characterization

If additional assessment is needed to “sufficiently characterize the site(s) for the remediation work to begin”:

- a statement must be included confirming that additional assessment will need to be performed AND
- affirm that a sufficient level of site characterization will be performed **by June 15, 2026** to allow for remediation work to begin.

This is in addition to required state environmental agency letter for Cleanup Grant applications



Not a complete list of guideline changes. See [link](#) for complete list.

NEW CHANGES

Cleanup Grants

If your site is eligible to enroll in your state VRP/VCP:

- Letter from State Environmental Authority must indicate whether the site(s) is enrolled or intends to be enrolled in state or Tribal voluntary response program for oversight (Site Characterization, Section B(9)b. of Threshold Criteria requirements in NOFO)

Grant budget can include costs for state VRP/VCP process!



NEW CHANGES

Cleanup Grants

Current Multipurpose Grant recipients that want to apply for funding must meet 70.00% drawdown requirement by [October 1, 2025](#) to apply for FY26 Cleanup Grant.

Point/Percentage Distribution

- Project Area Description and Plan for Revitalization – 31.5%
- Community Need and Community Engagement – 20%
- Task Description, Cost Estimates, and Measuring Success – 31.5%
- Programmatic Capability – 17%

Maximum number of points: 175 (Reduced from 180)





QUESTIONS?



GRANT PACKAGE



pennsylvania

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APPLICANT* INFORMATION SHEET

⚠ Limited to 3 Pages ⚠

- Must be on applicant's official letterhead
- Applicant Identification
 - Name & Full Address
- Website URL
- Funding Requested
 - Grant Type
 - Federal Funds Amount Requested
- Location
- Target Area & Priority Site Information (Site-Specific Assessment and Cleanup Only)
- Contacts
- Population- of your jurisdiction or the targeted areas
- Other factors checklist
 - Slightly different for each grant
- Letter of Support from PA DEP

**Copies of applications submitted under this solicitation are to be made publicly available



NARRATIVE & RANKING CRITERIA

 NOTE: Page Limits! 

All Narratives must be single-spaced. Nothing exceeding page limit will be reviewed.

- Cleanup/Assessment Grant: 10 page limit
- Multipurpose Grant: 12 page limit
- The Narrative, which includes responses to the ranking criteria, must provide sufficient detail to allow for an evaluation of the merits of the application.
 - i. Project Description and Plan for Revitalization
 - ii. Community Need and Community Engagement
 - iii. Task Descriptions, cost estimates, and measuring progress
 - iv. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance
- Threshold Criteria Responses
- Other Factors and Considerations
- **Note:** EPA only evaluates the information that is requested and required in the NOFO. Therefore, we do not encourage applicants to solicit support letters from members of Congress or include such letters with their applications.

GRANT PACKAGE:

Letter From State Environmental Authority



pennsylvania

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION

LETTER FROM PA DEP

- Required attachment for all grants
- Acknowledges state's awareness and support of the project(s)
- One letter can be used for multiple applications
- Letter must be current (cannot use previous year's letter)
- Contact for State Letter
 - James Young
 - jwyoung@pa.gov
 - (717) 772-5837
 - John Gross
 - johngross@pa.gov
 - (717) 783-7502
- Request should include:
 - Type of grant you are pursuing
 - Amount you are pursuing
 - Basic project information
 - To Whom the letter should be addressed
 - Please submit your request as soon as possible with at least a 2-week notice before your expected submission timeframe



PA DEP REVIEW FOR CLEANUP & MULTIPURPOSE GRANTS

- PA DEP must review assessment results (typically already enrolled in the Act 2 process)
- State letter must affirm eligibility for the site to be entered into PA DEP's Act 2 Program
- Letter must also affirm that the site has a sufficient level of site characterization to begin remediation or will have a sufficient level by summer 2026
- For sites not eligible for Act 2 (e.g., asbestos), an Environmental Professional must certify that a sufficient level of site characterization has been performed in order to begin remediation
- Please submit your request to John Gross at johngross@pa.gov as soon as possible to provide sufficient time to review assessment data!



pennsylvania

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KEY INFORMATION



FEDERAL FORMS

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- Budget information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
- EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
- Pre-award Compliance Review Report (EPA Form 4700-4)
 - Guidance on how to complete this form is available at www.epa.gov/grants/tips-completing-epa-form-4700-4
- Project Narrative Attachment Form
 - Attach the Narrative Information Sheet, the Narrative, and required attachments as one file.



To assist with completing the various federal forms, EPA has created a file with sample forms (pdf) that include useful tips and suggestions for your use and reference. Please click the link to access: [Sample Federal Forms](#)

The most current version of the forms listed above can be found on the [EPA Applicant and Recipient Forms](#) website.

GRANT DEBRIEF

If you applied previously and were unsuccessful, refer to your Grant Debrief



When In Doubt...

Check the FAQs!

Other EPA Resources, including slides and recordings of webinars, can be found on our [MARC Grant Resources](#) page





QUESTIONS?



MID-ATLANTIC TAB CAN HELP!

MID-ATLANTIC TAB

Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB)

- **Brownfield Education**
 - Trainings, webinars, events
- **Resource Identification**
 - **Grant writing assistance, grant review**, resource road maps
- **Local Brownfield Program Support**
 - Brownfield Inventory Development, questions on sites, technical support
- **Project Development & Design Assistance**
 - Site-specific design assistance, design support

IMPORTANT DEADLINES



January 16, 2026

Deadline to submit draft applications to Mid-Atlantic TAB for review

January 14, 2026

Deadline to submit request for letter to PA DEP

January 28, 2026

EPA Grant Submittal Deadline

PA CONTACTS



John Gross
johngross@pa.gov



Christian Smith
smith.christian@epa.gov

UPCOMING EVENTS



Pennsylvania Brownfields Conference March 23-26, 2026

Registration opens in the spring.

Updates and links will be shared in the Mid-Atlantic TAB monthly newsletter.

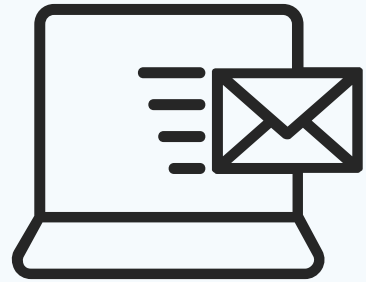
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TAB Hotline: **(304) 293-7002**

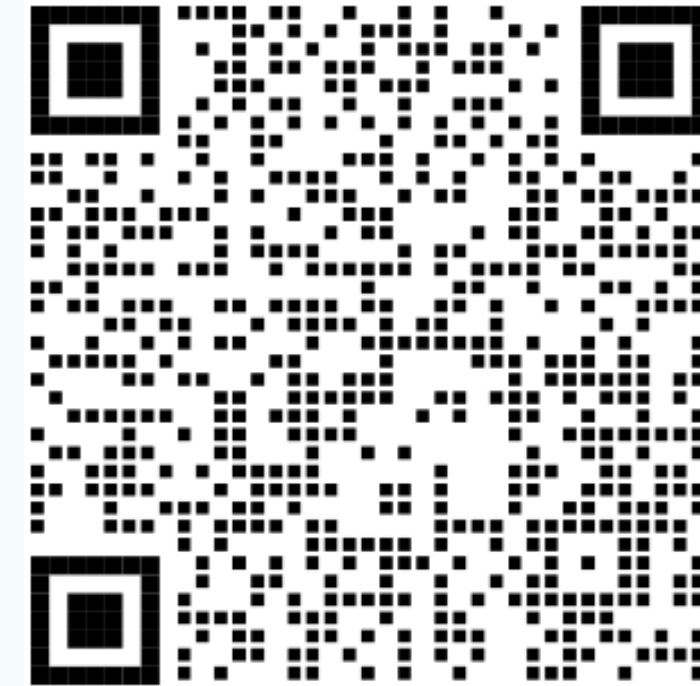
Direct Email: **wwutab@mail.wvu.edu**



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Other Resources

[Brownfields Website](#) | [Brownfields Grants](#) | [Brownfields Solicitations](#) | [Brownfield FAQ](#) | [Brownfields & Infrastructure Law](#) | [Mid-Atlantic TAB Website](#)