FY2026 Helpful Hints for EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grants

Criteria Cleanup	Helpful Hint (HH)
1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION (55 POINTS) A common pitfall of this section is to write too much upfront in 1.a. and lose point in other sections: Be Concise: Start with a brief introduction for the overview that sets the context. Avoid lengthy explanations and plan to expand on the details throughout the grant narrative. This keeps the reader engaged and assist you with a "cohesive" grant narrative. Use Minimal Statistics in this section and compare and contrast data. For example, "City unemployment is 10% compared to county unemployment at 4%." Always provide sources for your statistics.	
Target Areas and Brownfields (15 points)	
1.a. Overview of Brownfield Challenges, Description of Target area (5 pts)	Include area description and population size of the community so the reviewer gets an idea if this is an urban area or small rural community. If community has less than 15,000 residents, refer to the page number in your Other Factors Checklist. ● Clearly identify and describe your target area for the focused grant activities. Make sure that the reviewers have a clear idea where your target area is located within your community. Examples include proximity to a known body of water, interstate(s), direction from downtown, major industry (like a port), or known landmarks. *If the target area is already included in an active EPA grant, consult with your EPA region.* When discussing brownfields challenges and their impacts on the city(ies), town(s), or target area, **(why do you have these brownfields, why are they a problem, who is affected and how)**: ● Describe what specific brownfield challenges have affected this area, such as job loss, increased poverty and adverse health conditions. Reference data that is relevant to the targeted site(s) as well as the target area(s) and community as a whole (e.g. high unemployment, abandoned properties, higher crime rate, food desert, etc.) to describe the challenges posed by your brownfield site(s). ● Support your statements by highlighting only key statistics (e.g. population loss over time, poverty, unemployment, job loss, etc.) that you present in subsection 4.C.2.a.. Community Need. The information you provide here should **support the statements** you make about revitalization goals and community need in the following sections of your application. Focus on the brownfields challenges for the impacted community (blighted properties, higher crime rate, job loss, etc.) and **how this grant will help alleviate or address those challenges**. You want to show that the brownfield sites are significantly impacting your communities or target areas and the specific types of challenges/impacts for/on the community. Please see FAQ C.13 from FY2026 FAQs for additional links.

1.b. Description of Proposed Brownfield Sites (10 pts)	When highlighting the property(ies) selected for cleanup within the target area(s): ● Describe the location of your brownfield(s), e.g., center of town, outskirts, close to or near neighborhoods/schools, densely populated impoverished/minority neighborhoods, etc. ● Clearly identify proposed brownfield site(s) and describe in detail why they are a priority for cleanup and subsequent reuse (significant environmental/health/community concerns, unsafe structures/property conditions, good redevelopment potential, etc.) and who determined them to be a priority (did the community have input?). ● Indicate the previous property use(s) and how it is related to the contamination. ● Briefly describe if the **existing contamination impacts surrounding residents, sensitive populations, or waterways (stormwater runoff, wind-blown sediments, potential vapor intrusion).**Use available environmental reports such as remedial investigations, site characterization, or Phase II Environmental Site Assessment, or your environmental agency, as resources to describe the contamination that you intend to clean up with the grant funds. Demonstrate knowledge of clean up requirements, such as the types of contaminants, their extent, structures that need to be removed or reused, how exposure to the contaminants impact surrounding residents, businesses, waterways, wildlife, etc. Please see Section III. Environmental Information for Targeted Area and Priority Sites in: *Grant Data Research | KSU TAB - Technical Assistance to Brownfields* Take a look at the Other Factors check list and see if any of those factors apply (i.e. is the site adjacent or near a body of water or federally designated floodplain, is the site impacted by mine-scarred lands, etc.). If they do, state it here. Bodies of water can be large or small and might include lakes, rivers, creeks, marshes, wetlands, or floodplains. Do not include demographic and health data here - refer the reader to the Section 2 subsection where this information is detailed.
Revitalization of the Target Area (20 points)	
1.c. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plansl(10 pts)	Clearly describe the reuse strategy or projected reuse for the proposed site(s). Provide enough detail to show the reviewer that the proposed reuse on the site aligns with local government land use and revitalization plans or community priorities. Include if the plans are specific to the Target Area(s). ● Address why cleanup of the site(s) makes the most sense or how critical the site(s) is/are to the overall revitalization plan for the target area. ● **Demonstrate how these plans were inclusive of community voices and preferences**. ○ Describe how the community was meaningfully involved in the development of master plans, reuse strategy, vision, or other decision-making efforts. ● Include any sustainable community revitalization measures considered as part of the reuse strategy and refer to the page number in your Other Factors Checklist (section V.B. of the Guidelines). ● Indicate whether or not the site is in a federally designated floodplain and justify the reuse strategy/project reuse is an appropriate reuse option. If possible, try to give the reviewer a strong sense that reuse/redevelopment is likely to happen after the cleanup.

	The proposed reuse/redevelopment of the site(s) should align with solutions to the challenges presented in Section 4.C.1.a. - Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area. Please see Section V. Alignment with Sustainability and Resiliency in: *Grant Data Research | KSU TAB - Technical Assistance to Brownfields*
1.d. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy (10 pts)	Link the outcomes and benefits of the project(s) **consistent with the issues described in Section 1.a. (Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Areas) and Section 2.a.(Community Need)**, to your target community. • Provide specific anticipated outcomes and economic improvements, such as X% increase in tax base, number of jobs this project may create, etc. Specify how many acres of reusable land will be created if all site(s) is/are cleaned up. If you cannot be specific, provide a realistic estimate based on reliable resources. • If the cleanup will potentially benefit the local economy, describe how. This can be quantified as noted above, or qualitatively, e.g., cleanup is on a potentially catalytic site necessary for revitalization of the target community. • If applicable, describe how the project preserves greenfields, creates or adds to a park, greenway, recreational property or other property used for non-profit purposes. Provide metrics such as X acres of new greenspace in a low-income neighborhood, X number of pocket parks in developed areas, X square miles protected from sprawl, etc. • If applicable, describe space for not-for-profit, governmental or charitable organizations, including amount and type of space provided, and how these improve the livability of community residents. Will the proposed project improve local resilience to extreme weather events/natural disaster and/or facilitate renewable, geothermal energy, or incorporate energy efficiency measures? • If you have considered any measures that will improve local resilience to extreme weather events and natural disasters, facilitate the use of renewable energy, or improve energy efficiency as part of the reuse strategy, mention it in this section and include the page number in your Other Factors Checklist. • How will the project potentially incorporate renewable energy or energy efficiency measures? Will renewable energy be used as part of the site reuse? Will building codes require certain energy efficiency measures or standards? Visit EPA's Renewable Energy or Energy-Efficient Approaches in Brownfield Redevelopment Fact Sheet for more information. Check out ***FY2026 FAQs*** ***for "Brownfields, Public Health, Extreme Weather" (Section S) and "Benefits of Brownfields Projects" in Section T for helpful information.*** Additional Resources can be found in Section IV. and Section V. in: *Grant Data Research | KSU TAB - Technical Assistance to Brownfields*
Strategy for Leveraging Resources (20 points)	
Use the ***Sample Format*** for 1e. through 1.g to keep information readable and organized.	

Ensure that attached documentation **<u>demonstrates secured</u>** funding commitments. Refer to the page number in your Other Factors Checklist (section 6.C.(1). of the Guidelines).	
1.e. Resources Needed for Site Characterization (5 pts)	***Coordinate early with the appropriate State or Tribal Environmental Authority (or equivalent state or Tribal regulatory oversight authority).*** Your letter from the State or Tribe, which is a threshold item for this grant should indicate: ● If there is a sufficient level of site characterization from the environmental site assessment performed to date for the remediation work to begin on the site(s); or ● Indicate that additional assessment is needed to sufficiently characterize the site(s) for the remediation work to begin; and, ● If additional assessment is needed, you should include a statement that indicates that additional assessment is needed and affirm that there will be a **sufficient level of site characterization from the environmental site assessment performed by June 15, 2026,** for the remediation work to begin on the site(s). **This information should coincide with your site characterization needs.** If you have environmental professionals employed (or contracted) by your community, it may be helpful to discuss the site characterization or remedial investigation report for the property with them to help determine the likelihood of needing additional investigation. All leveraged funding should be easily identifiable including the source of the funding, activity being funded, and amount. Do not just list random funding received/sought, but make sure the reviewer can clearly see how it links to your redevelopment project. It is important to note leveraging resources that have been secured and those that are pending or being sought (e.g., applied for a grant.) Applications which demonstrate some level of secured funding will be viewed more favorably. ● Describe specific funds, such as grant and loans you have already secured, as well as those you are pursuing to pay for any additional characterization that may be needed. ● Discuss eligibility and plans for leveraging funds from other sources in order to show commitment to reuse the property once it is assessed and any cleanup is accomplished. ● If you have not already secured leveraged funding, demonstrate that you have the ability to leverage funds and describe the ones you are pursuing. Describe possible local, state, federal or regional resources. The more variety, the better. Local commitments are especially important. Think about what your partners, if you have any, can contribute and discuss it here. EPA and State targeted brownfields assessments (TBAs), completed or proposed, are examples of leveraging. Examples of funding resources include other federal funding (e.g. HUD, EDA, USDA, etc.), State program (e.g. State Tax Credits), local funds (tax increment financing zones), philanthropic foundations, and traditional private financing. ***See C.9. in the FY2026 FAQs for more leveraging information.***
1.f. Resources Needed for Site Remediation (5pts)	Use positive and active verbs, such as "we are working on...", "we will commit...", "we have applied for...". ● If this grant will be sufficient to address cleanup, state that here and briefly explain why. ● In case grant funds are not sufficient to address the contamination at your proposed site(s), describe funding that has

	been secured, has been sought, or will be sought, for the completion of site remediation. ● Describe funds you already have secured, as well as those you are pursuing. ● Make clear how the leveraged funding/resources you have identified are relevant to this project. In other words, do not just list random funding received/sought, but make sure the reviewer can clearly see how it links to your remediation project. ● Discuss plans and partners for leveraging in order to show commitment to cleaning up and redeveloping the property. ● Local commitments are especially important. Think about what your partners, if you have any, can contribute and discuss it here. Preferably commitments by partners should be firm and have an associated value. Reference secure commitments made by partners and ask for a letter of commitment that may be attached to document the secured funding. ● If cleanup of the proposed site will catalyze additional redevelopment in the target area, highlight the catalytic qualities of the target site(s) along with discussing the community's commitment. ● Describe possible local, State, Tribal, Federal or regional resources that are committed or that you are pursuing. ● ***See C.9. in the FY2026 FAQs for more leveraging information.*** ● Show that the project WILL be completed if EPA provides cleanup funding. ***Note, a response will only earn full points when the applicant has resources that are secured, significant, relevant, and sufficient to complete remediation. Documentation of relevant secured funding should be attached to the application.***
1.g. Resources for Site Reuse (5 pts)	● Discuss eligibility and plans for leveraging funds from other sources in order to show commitment to reuse the property once cleanup is accomplished. Consider all activities that may need to be performed, such as demolition and construction activities at the site.
1.h. Use of Existing Infrastructure (5 pts)	Include information about the reuse of existing infrastructure at the priority site(s) or target area. Indicate if the infrastructure in place (water, sewer, electricity) was built for large capacity industrial or commercial activities and whether you believe it can be used for your proposed reuse. Infrastructure refers to roads and utilities (sewer, water, electricity, broadband, etc.); transportation (bus, train or air); other energy and telecommunications and even housing and business services needed to support redevelopment. Be as inclusive as possible. The benefits of using existing infrastructure may include: ● money and energy savings, reuse/recycling of materials, etc. ● avoiding construction noise, dust and traffic associated with building new infrastructure. ● preservation of history and culture of an area ● if applicable, explain how your project can/will lead to any sustainable reuse of buildings or structures. If additional infrastructure is needed, discuss what is needed and the plan for how funding for it will be sought or provided. Please see the Infrastructure Evaluation (epa.gov) for definition of infrastructure needed during redevelopment. The benefits of infrastructure upgrades may include: ● energy efficient building construction (energy efficient lighting, heating, cooling, building materials

	● energy efficient replacement of lead pipes or updated septic or sewer systems ● connections to public drinking water sources for residential developments ● traffic and pedestrian safety features, energy savings that result in cleaner air and water, etc. ● mitigation of vehicle congestion and air pollution ● updated lighting, walkways, and trails to promote connectivity
2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (35 POINTS) This section focuses on communities within your geographic boundaries and in your target area(s) that cannot secure funding because of small populations and/or low income needs and needs to **tie back to Section 1.a. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area.**	
Community Need (20 points)	
2.a. The Community's Need for Funding (5 pts)	This section should be consistent with the descriptions written in 1.a.. (Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area). Explain how this grant would meet needs of the community. Describe the need for funds: ● how economic conditions limit the funding available for addressing your brownfields sites ● support your statements by highlighting key statistics (population loss over time, poverty, unemployment, job loss,) ● if applicable, because community either has a small population (15,000) or low income. ● why the community has no other source of funding for the proposed assessment, remediation or redevelopment activities. ● describe the economic impacts of your brownfields. For example: did prospective employers back out because of environmental unknowns of the property they were looking at? Does the community have to pay for maintenance of the brownfield site(s), is there an increase in policing required because of the brownfields? ***How will this grant address these issues?*** Use statistics (with citations) to support your statements about small population, low income or other relevant demographics that show need. Include the targeted community as well as the community, as a whole, to describe the economic impacts of your brownfields: ● reviewing sales tax data, or assessed valuations of property to identify downward trends that demonstrate that brownfields have been a partial cause of financial impact to the target area and made other funding from taxes unavailable. ● focus your census data and describe the adverse impact of brownfields on a subset of the population (consider using census blocks rather than census tracts). ***Please see C.13. in the FY2026 FAQs for additional examples and links to resources for demographic information.*** Also, please see Sections I. and IV.: "Demographic Information" and "Community Need and Economic Information" in: *Grant Data Research | KSU TAB - Technical Assistance to Brownfields* .
2.b.Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations (5 pts)	Sensitive populations include "children, pregnant women, minority or low-income communities, or other sensitive populations. However, there is no one definition of a sensitive population. ***See S.4. in the FY2026 FAQs for more information about sensitive populations.*** Additional information can be found in Section II. Health and Welfare of the Community in:

	Grant Data Research | KSU TAB - Technical Assistance to Brownfields Include demographics on sensitive populations (children, elderly, or people with chronic conditions) in the target area. If the sensitive populations statistics do not support your application favorably, focus on those statistics that reflect the challenges faced by the community (lack of medical services, food desert, veterans population, etc.). Discuss the proximity of residential areas, hospitals, schools, daycare facilities or elder care and assisted living facilities to brownfield site(s). Discuss how you will protect the health of sensitive populations living near or adjacent to your proposed cleanup site(s) during cleanup activities (i.e. dust control, appropriate truck routes, perimeter vapor monitoring, if applicable, fencing, etc.). For smaller communities use any and all available information to provide a picture of the impact brownfields have on communities in target areas. Note that the information provided needs to tie back to Sections 1.a.. Severity of health **or** welfare: ● Include health effects in the community that are possibly directly or indirectly caused by contaminants present at the brownfield sites in the target area. This can include infant mortality rate, incidence of asthma and cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes, low life expectancy, etc. ● Do not forget mental health (depression may be linked to the presence of brownfields). ● Is the brownfield site an attraction to crime or unsafe activities or located in an area of high crime – will the project reduce these threats? Contact your local health department for any statistics that support your discussion. If data is not available at the target area level, explain how the data used (i.e. city or county level data) is representative of the target area. If your community has a Community Action Program (CAP) that serves sensitive populations, review their Community Needs Assessment. Local and Regional Hospitals also provide a Community Health Needs Assessment for communities. ***See C.13. in the FY2026 FAQs for more examples of health, welfare, environmental, and other demographic information that may help you provide information about your community, and C.14 provides examples of health and/or welfare issues that may result from extreme weather and natural disasters.*** See Section II. *"Health and Welfare" in* *Grant Data Research | KSU TAB - Technical Assistance to Brownfields* Describe how the grant funds will address these threats, i.e., if greenspace is created, correlate how it will promote outdoor recreation, exercise, etc. that will improve the health and welfare of these sensitive populations. Discuss how your project and associated reuse strategy will identify and mitigate human health risks (i.e. via removal of contaminants, prevention of pollution (via zoning, codes, etc.) and prevention of future brownfields through sustainable redevelopment). Can also include the addition of sidewalks or bike lanes that will provide pedestrian safety, better walkability, and transportation alternatives.
2.c. Greater Than Normal Incidence of	Address cancer, asthma and birth defects rates that may be associated with exposure to hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or petroleum. If one or all of these are not elevated compared to the region, State, U.S., mention this.

Disease and Adverse Health Conditions (5 pts)	If other statistics are elevated, such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, lower life expectancy, etc.; mention it and make a potential connection with your brownfields. Work with the local or state health department to gather data on incidence of disease and adverse health conditions for your target area(s). Use negative trends or disproportionate percentages to demonstrate negative health impacts in your target area(s). Compare local data to regional, state and federal statistics. Discuss any higher-than-average health effects in the community that may be caused by contaminants present at the proposed cleanup site(s). For example: if it is known that there is lead in soil, talk about childhood lead exposure and statistics about lead levels in blood, which causes neurological issues and learning difficulties. ***In the FY2026 FAQs, see C.13 for Tools to locating this information for your Community and Section S "Brownfields, Public Health, Extreme Weather, and Natural Disasters*** Other resources can be found in Section II. Health and Welfare of the Community and Section V. Alignment with Sustainability and Resiliency in: *Grant Data Research | KSU TAB - Technical Assistance to Brownfields* Describe how you have and/or will prioritize brownfields that contribute to impacts on residents who are already experiencing greater cumulative public health threats or greater than normal incidence of disease or adverse health conditions. i.e., if a community is potentially impacted by proximity to a power plant or heavily used highway, as well as proximity to brownfields, explain this situation and the urgency for alleviating impacts to their health, such as asthma or heart conditions. Indicate that this grant will allow you to identify and address those issues for those residents impacted. Describe how the cleanup and reuse strategy may help improve the health of the target population. Include elimination of exposure to contaminants through cleanup and any site improvements that will benefit the community, like parks for recreation, trees for air quality, healthy food, or other social determinants of health incorporated into reuse plan.
2.d. Economically Impoverished /Disproportionately Impacted Populations (5 pts)	Cumulative impacts characterize the potential state of vulnerability or resilience of a community. How does the target area population bear greater pollution burdens or consequences? How will the grant and revitalization plans/reuse address these issues? ***In the FY2026 FAQs, see C.13, S.1-S.3 and T.1 for additional resources.*** Other resources can be found in Section II. Health and Welfare of the Community and Section V. Alignment with Sustainability and Resiliency in: *Grant Data Research | KSU TAB - Technical Assistance to Brownfields*
Community Engagement (15 points)	
2.e. Project Involvement (5 pts)	Use the sample format provided in the guidelines, or use a format that is legible and includes the information on the table provided in the guidelines. This clearly and concisely provides the information requested by EPA and will facilitate the review for those reviewing your application. Listed partners should be local organizations and have a commitment or special interest in the proposed project. Quality is better than quantity. For example, if your projected reuse is on housing then you should have a partner with relevant expertise in housing. • If your community is small or remote enough that no local community organizations exist, make sure you state that

	but also explain how your community is engaged with the project. Your local Chamber of Commerce, citizen groups, environmental organizations, etc., qualify as community organizations. Schools, Churches and youth groups in the community also qualify. ● Include a variety of partners covering multiple aspects of your project. Try to include organizations such as: local citizen groups, environmental groups, developer groups, chamber(s) of commerce, property owners as well as governmental/public entities supporting brownfield redevelopment such as the local health department, local community college or university, local and regional economic development agencies and local brownfield and environmental departments. ***See E.4, E.5, and E.6 in the FY2026 FAQs for more information about roles partners may play in the grant process.***
2.f. Project Roles (5 pts)	● Meet with and discuss your application with your potential partners early. Explain each organization's role is in decision making. If the development organization will have no role in cleanup decisions, state so. ● Include the environmental agency that will be reviewing/approving cleanup plans (tribal or local authority).Make sure your partners have a chance to review and provide input on your application! *EPA may sporadically check up on listed partners to make sure they are fully aware and knowledgeable of their role in the project.* ● Make sure your partners can provide different expertise or assistance to your grant project, e.g., don't just name all developer organizations or economic development organizations.
2.g. Incorporating. Community Input(5 pt)	Develop a clear, complete and robust community engagement program. See KSU TAB "Community Engagement Process".pdf and U.S. EPA: Capacity Building Through Effective Meaningful Engagement, In-person meetings may be more successful if held in the target area or proximal to the priority sites. Some examples of involving the affected/target community include: ● Hold in-person or virtual public meetings where the Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) progress/status of the project is explained, re-use planning is discussed and feedback is collected. Updates to the community should continue throughout the duration of the project. ● Public meetings, web sites, social media, newspaper and newsletters are mechanisms you can use to provide updates to the community and ask for feedback/comments. ● Offer opportunities to provide feedback around the clock (online, email, etc.) to allow people to become familiar with the project and offer comments on their own schedule. ● Explain how your methods are appropriate for your community; i.e., most of your community members work during the day so you schedule your meeting in the evening when more are available to attend; you offer childcare to encourage parents to attend, etc. ● Address any language barriers within your targeted community, i.e. provide translation services (meeting invitations, meetings, documents) as needed. If all of your community speaks English, then be sure to mention this so the reviewer doesn't think you've missed this aspect. ● Address the needs of sensitive populations - for example, provide ADA accessible meeting space if your targeted community consists of a high percentage of seniors. ● Consider various methods of reaching and receiving feedback from target populations, such as remote videoconferences, radio, street fairs, surveys, etc.

	• Make sure your community engagement includes soliciting input from the community and not just updating them on site progress. • ***Just collecting community input is not enough*** – you need to respond to it and use it in a meaningful way. Discuss how you will seek feedback from the community and how those comments will be addressed. EPA places emphasis on community engagement as well as seeking and responding to community input so make sure you address how comments from community members will be addressed to receive maximum points for this section. Do not forget to describe how you incorporated community and partner input into your project.
3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS (55 points)	
Prior to beginning the draft of this section, please read the introductory narrative for important information!	
Proposed Cleanup Plan (10 points)	
3.a. Proposed Cleanup Plan (10 pts)	Discuss and summarize the ABCA(s) in this section. Please note that each proposed Brownfield site requires an ABCA which will need to be summarized in this submittal. Describe why the chosen cleanup alternative was selected. ***It is likely that your reviewer may not review the draft ABCA(s) submitted as part of the submittal and the summary(ies) are important for understanding of the tasks, activities and outputs.*** • Describe how the cleanup will address soil, groundwater, surface water, and/or sediment contamination. • If excavation is part of the cleanup, describe how and where disposal will occur. • Discuss the merits of the proposed cleanup plan: is it the most economic or the only feasible option for cleanup? If other cleanup options were considered, discuss why the chosen cleanup plan was selected.
Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs (25 points)	
3.b. Project Implementation (10 pts)	List and describe the tasks necessary to complete for your project to be successful. Multiple activities may be grouped under one task. For example, the task "Project Management" may include contractor procurement, reporting, etc. Your task/activities should represent a sound and efficient plan for performing the overall project. Ensure that each task includes information on the task lead, anticipated outputs, estimated cost, and start and end dates. • Use the format suggested by EPA as it will make it easier for the reviewer to find the information they are looking for. • Ensure all tasks/activities are eligible, as a response that includes ineligible tasks/activities will be evaluated less favorably. • Review previous successful grants (available on KSU TAB EZ website etools.ksutab.org/tools/tabez) to get ideas for how to present information in this table in a succinct way. • See FY2026 FAQs Section L. for information specific to Cleanup Grants and ***Section G "Use of Grant Funds" where you will find a plethora of budget-related topics.*** Provide a detailed description of each of the tasks listed in the budget table. Utilize precise task descriptions. Explain what personnel will be doing. If you anticipate hiring a contractor, explain what project activities this contractor will perform. • Don't use acronyms that have not been presented earlier, spell it out. • Be realistic. If your cleanup costs are expected to be beyond the grant award, identify what can be paid with the grant and what can be done with leveraged funds. • Don't forget to include enrollment of your cleanup site(s) into your state's voluntary response/ cleanup program. The cost for doing so is an eligible expense and should be considered in your budget.

	If your project will include a subaward(s) for services such as community outreach, describe the exact activities or services the subawardee(s) will provide. Keep in mind that EPA will incorporate this narrative into your workplan if you are awarded a grant so accurate detail of subawardee(s) tasks/services is important. Subawards may be conveyed to eligible entities, such as nonprofits, local government, etc. For more information see Grants Policy Issuance (GPI) 16-01: EPA Subaward Policy for EPA Assistance Agreement Recipients | US EPA Indicate the process you will use to determine which entities will receive participant support costs, the reason, and the method of providing the assistance. ● If a key activity associated with your project is not included in your budget, explain why. For example, if another part of your organization or a project partner will be taking care of community involvement activities and is not charging this to the grant, note that. Otherwise, reviewers may wonder how key activities will get accomplished. ● If your organization will conduct activities in support of the project but will not charge to the project, state so. (Examples may include grant management, procurement, community involvement, etc.). Discuss any leveraged resources (other than EPA) that will help bring the grant to successful completion
3.c. Anticipated Project Schedule (5 pts)	Your anticipated project schedule should be described by months or quarters and not years. For example: "Community engagement activities will begin in the 2nd Quarter of the First Year." " Public meetings providing updates on the cleanup will occur bi-annually in Years 2, 3 and 4." ● Include a timeline/schedule of milestones demonstrating how you will complete the proposed activities within 4 years. Make sure the milestones are aggressive, but at the same time achievable. Make sure to include all key activities in your schedule such as procuring a Qualified Environmental Professional, community engagement, ABCA and/or Cleanup Completion approval through State or Tribal Environmental Authority, etc. Include anticipated dates for key events such as procurement of contractors, etc.… rather than saying "ongoing: for all tasks.
3.d. Task/Activity Lead (5 pts)	Identify activity leads that are qualified for the roles they will be performing: ● Task lead should be within the applicants' organization, providing oversight to contractors or subawardees as appropriate. ● If a lead is not with the applicant's organization, include a justification. ● Make sure the applicant is directing grant activities and that the local health agency is involved in health monitoring activities, if applicable.
3.e. Outputs (5 pts)	The expected outputs for the grants awarded under these guidelines are cleaned up brownfield sites. Other outputs may include the number of community meetings held, the number of Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) completed, the number of community involvement and cleanup plans completed, and/or the number of underground storage tanks pulled. List and briefly describe outputs:

	• Be realistic on the outputs and the budget. If possible, consult with someone knowledgeable about costs for environmental tasks. Outputs are work products that are measurable and will be done on a set schedule or by a set date. For example, an output could be "conduct 3 community meetings" or "complete 2 ABCAs". • Correlate outputs with project objectives. If you are conducting a cleanup; a cleanup report will be a deliverable and a cleaned-up property (X acres) can be the output. Coordinate with the applicable regulatory agency (state or tribal authority) to identify the deliverables that will be required to conduct and document a cleanup. Examples of deliverables could include: • Generic and site-specific quality assurance project plans, as required by the EPA Region and state agency. • Quarterly progress reports • Annual Financial reports • Cleanup Plan • Updated ABCA (if applicable) • Cleanup completion report • Site Closure documents
Cost Estimates (15 points)	
3.f. Cost Estimates 15 pts)	USE the budget sample table. It will clearly and concisely present your budget in a way that will facilitate review by the EPA reviewer. Do not change the "Budget Categories" in the table, as these are the standard federal budget categories. If a budget category is not relevant, then leave it blank, but do not delete. Link budget amounts to specific tasks discussed in 3.b. and include the basis for each of your estimated costs. • Feel free to add additional Tasks in the budget table if more than four Tasks are needed. However, too many Tasks may be difficult for reviewers to follow. Typical task categories may include: Program/Project Management; Community Engagement; Cleanup Planning, Cleanup Implementation, etc. *Reminder: Section 3.A.(2) of the EPA Cleanup Grant Guidelines explains that a local government (NOT state or tribal governments) may use up to 10 percent of its grant funds for health monitoring of populations exposed to hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants from the brownfield site; monitoring and enforcement of any institutional control used to prevent human exposure to any hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant from the brownfield site.* Davis Bacon rates may apply to construction activities associated with cleanup and may inflate cleanup costs if these rates had not been considered for cost estimating in the ABCA. See The Davis-Bacon Act and Brownfields | US EPA for more information. ***See FY2026 FAQS C.18 – C.27 for more information on construction costs and Davis Bacon rules.***

	Travel to the EPA National Brownfields Conference, regional brownfields conferences and other related educational meetings/conferences are legitimate budget items under "Travel". Grantees are expected to attend the National Brownfields Conference. ***See G.8 and G.9 in the FY2026 FAQs for more information about pre-award costs.*** • Explain and justify equipment and/or supply budget items. If you have "supplies", do not exceed $10,000. Anything over $10,000 is considered "equipment". Be specific about supplies, not just "miscellaneous supplies." Examples include: markers, pens, post-it notes, ink for printing, and name tags for public meetings. • Double check that your proposed budget only includes eligible costs. • Round the numbers as much as possible and check your MATH. The budget should add up correctly. • Be clear on how many sites are being cleaned up and separate the budget if it is more than one. • Be realistic! Do not request unrealistic amounts of money for a task. The reviewer wants to see that you plan to use the funding prudently and efficiently. At the same time, include what you actually think it will cost based on past assessment work in your area. For example, if you live in an area where costs generally run high, explain this and the reason why in your basis of cost statement. Avoid easy ways to lose points: • *What's the source of the costs? Provide rationale for the values.* • *Unit costs in the wrong area, not in Cost Estimates* • *Indirect costs were not fully explained.* • *Break down costs per unit. For example- hours x rate = $$* • *Include details on how costs are developed, with rates for personnel.* • *If you include any supply costs, specifically identify the supplies.* • *Check/re-check your MATH! Cross reference costs outlined in the Budget Table with costs described for each Task for accuracy.*
Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results (5 points)	
3.g. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results (5 pts)	Outputs are work products that are measurable and will be done on a set schedule or by a set date. Make sure outputs correlate with the proposed project and are likely to be achieved in the 4-year grant period. For example, an output could be "conduct 3 community meetings" or "finalize the ABCA" or "complete 1 site cleanup", "# of Remediation Completion Documents", # tons of excavated hazardous waste", "# of acres ready for reuse". Outcomes are results from carrying out the grant; i.e. jobs created and funding leveraged through the economic reuse of sites; acres made ready for reuse; acres of greenspace created for communities; infrastructure investments leveraged, and the minimized exposure to hazardous substances and petroleum contamination. Systems to Track: • Describe a plan and mechanism for tracking and evaluating progress. Specify personnel and mechanisms, such as project management software or spreadsheets, to track your anticipated project schedule.

	• Examples of tracking, measuring and evaluating are the use of quarterly and annual reports, progress tracking software, team meetings to evaluate progress and make corrections where necessary, ACRES, etc. • Most outcomes are realized after the grant closes out. If applicable, describe how you will report outcomes after closeout, i.e. send photos of groundbreaking, press releases, send progress, and before/after photos and updates. • Don't forget to mention how you plan to report progress to ACRES. • You may use the KSU TAB Brownfields Inventory Tool (BIT) etools.ksutab.org/tools/bit for tracking progress. **Note: You must be logged into your free ksutab.org account to access BiT.**
4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE (30 points)	
Programmatic Capability (15 points)	
4.a. Organizational Structure (5pts)	Describe your organization's structure and departments' roles that will support management of this grant. For example, highlight existing capacity in key functions (technical, administrative, project management, financial, etc.). • Outline past grants/projects of similar scale and purpose that your organization has successfully completed. • Describe the tools and procedures, i.e. internal audits, management software, etc., that ensure operational and programmatic success.
4.b. Description of Key Staff (5 pts)	Include information highlighting staff availability, roles, expertise, qualifications and experience. Include assignments to key roles and the expertise / qualifications / experience of assigned staff. Include their education, years of experience, or other similar projects they have worked on and managed. • At a minimum include the project manager role, technical contact, decision maker(s), procurement expert, etc. • Communicate how the level of expertise/qualifications/experience of your key staff will result in timely and successful expenditure of funds as you complete all technical, administrative and financial requirements of the grant. • Describe the key aspects of the organizational structure that will help support this grant. For example, if there is a dedicated outreach group that will lead outreach , indicate so. If there is a financial group with procurement expertise that will support fiscal and procurement activities, mention it. • If any, describe any administrative or board approval process pertaining to the grant or scope of work Discuss contingency plans in case key staff quits or gets sick. Do you have an immediate replacement? If so, who?
4.c. Acquiring Additional Resources (5 pts)	Present a plan for acquiring any additional resources (subrecipients and contractors) that you know you will need for successful completion of the proposed project. • Describe your organization's system(s) to appropriately acquire any additional expertise and resources (i.e., contractors or subrecipients) required to successfully complete the project. • If contractors are needed, state that you will follow required competitive Procurement Standards in 2 CFR 200.317-326 when hiring contractors. ***See Section D. in the FY2026 FAQs for more information on Consultant Services and Procurement.*** For more information see Brownfields Grants: Guidance on Competitively Procuring a Contractor (epa.gov)
Past Performance and Accomplishments (15 points)	
4.d. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant (15 points)	

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Do not include Targeted Brownfields Assessments, Area-Wide Planning Grants, Environmental Workforce Development & Job Training Grants, and subawards from another Brownfields Grant recipient</td></tr>
<tr><td>4.d.(1) Accomplishments (5 pts)</td><td>For recipients of an EPA Brownfield Assessment, Cleanup, Revolving Loan Fund, Multipurpose or 128(a) Grant, use the three most recent grants, and specify the grant number, grant type, year received and period of performance, and amount of grant:
Clearly indicate your compliance with the workplan, schedule and terms and conditions of those grants.
If you have remaining funds on any of these grants, then explain why and how those funds are either already committed to ongoing eligible activities or will be expended by the end of the grant. If the grant is closed and there was remaining funds, then provide a reasonable explanation for why that happened.
Describe progress toward achieving the expected outputs and outcomes. Make sure these accomplishments are reflected in ACRES. EPA is likely to check. If outputs and outcomes are not accurately reflected in ACRES, provide an explanation.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">4.d.(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements (10 pts) This criterion is broken into 2 parts
EPA is likely to check if your reports were submitted as outlined in the cooperative agreement, and accomplishments were reported and reflected in ACRES.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Part 1 Compliance (5 pts)</td><td>Explain any deviation(s) from the work plan and schedule, and reporting related to past/current brownfield grants.
Indicate your success meeting the workplan, schedule, grant requirements, etc.
If there were deviations from the proposed work summarize the issue and resolution.
Make sure you explain any anomalies related to past/current brownfield grants.
Discuss history of submitting all ACRES, quarterly and annual reports, and explanations for untimely reporting. Indicate if expected results were achieved and progress had been adequately documented in ACRES and/or quarterly reports.
Discuss history of completing and submitting deliverables, and explain if targets were not met.
If the expected results were not achieved, explain how it was resolved and communicated.
Provide information on no more than three grants.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Part 2 Compliance (5 pts)</td><td>For open grants, indicate any amount unspent and reasons for not spending the entire amount, and issues and how these are being resolved, i.e. those funds are either already committed to ongoing eligible activities or will be expended by the end of the grant. If the grant is closed and there were remaining funds, then provide a reasonable explanation for why that happened. If there were any deviations, describe the measures taken to correct them.

If you have remaining funds on any of these grants, then explain why and how those funds are either already committed to ongoing eligible activities or will be expended by the end of the grant.

For closed EPA Brownfield Grants, if there were funds remaining, provide a reasonable explanation as to why they were not expended within the Period of Performance.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">4.e. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Financial Assistance Agreements (15 points)</td></tr>
</table>

4.e.(1)Purpose and Accomplishment (5 pts)	If you haven't received an EPA Brownfield Multipurpose, Assessment, Cleanup, Revolving Loan Fund or 128(a) grant, but you have received a federal or non-federal grant (not contract) of similar size, scope or relevance to this project then complete this sub-section. Do not include federal or non-federal assistance agreements where you were a subawardee or partner. You must have been the recipient of the assistance agreement. • Describe the granting entity, amount, activity funded, years of performance and details of the award. • Describe the history of managing these grants, i.e. federal, state, local, foundation, etc. and accomplishments of that grant. • Describe the scope, outputs, outcomes, and other measures of success, under those grants that should be focused on environmental projects. • Describe what was accomplished with the funding including whether the expected results were achieved. EPA wants to have confidence your organization knows how to manage grant dollars and meet project outcomes. Try to avoid falling into 4.f.. which results in a neutral score.
4.e.(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements(10 pts)	• Discuss compliance with reporting - history of submitting periodic reports, and explanations for untimely reporting. • Discuss history of completing and submitting deliverables, and explain if targets were not met. • If the expected results were not achieved explain why and how your organization communicated with the awarding entity.
4.f. Never Received Any Type of Federal or Non-Federal Financial Assistance Agreements (8 points) If you find yourself in this category, it's ok. Include a statement that your organization has never received any type of federal or non-federal assistance agreement. If your community recently received a grant that has not been completed or not enough time has elapsed to conduct reporting or produce outputs or outcomes, explain here, and provide information on the granting agency, amount, purpose, period of performance, and any other relevant information.	

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